



JEAN CABOT *at* ASHTON

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"WELL, I NEVER, A FRESHMAN ASLEEP AT THE SWITCH!" — *Page 23.*

JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

BY
GERTRUDE FISHER SCOTT

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR O. SCOTT



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JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

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Contents

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE DAY BEFORE	1
II. HOW IT LOOKED ON WEDNESDAY	14
III. FIRST IMPRESSIONS	31
IV. THE FRESHMAN RECEPTION	49
V. INITIATION	78
VI. THE HARVARD-YALE GAME	102
VII. THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS	126
VIII. THE CORAL BEADS	154
IX. THE CHAFING-DISH PARTY	167
X. THE COSTUME PARTY	189
XI. MIDYEAR'S	206
XII. BEFORE THE FRESHMAN-SOPHOMORE GAME	224
XIII. THE GAME	246
XIV. THE BANQUET	261
XV. MR. CABOT'S VISIT	280
XVI. PRIZE-SPEAKING	298
XVII. THE TENNIS TOURNAMENT	321
XVIII. CLASS DAY	339

Illustrations

"Well, I never, a freshman, asleep at the switch!" (Page 23)	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
"Why, what are you doing here? We've been looking for you all over college"	90
"I don't know yet, Jean, but a man can do anything if he's educated"	152
"Somebody open the south window, quick!" . . .	178
With a quick movement she threw it over the shoulder of her antagonist	258
Natalie went after the last two games in whirlwind fashion	328

Jean Cabot at Ashton

CHAPTER I

THE DAY BEFORE

“**N**OW, Tom dear, don't you do another single thing for me; I'm sure I shall be all right, and Cousin Anna will meet me at the train in Boston and then everything will be smooth sailing. You'll miss your train if you wait another moment and blame me for it ever after, so good-by; I'll write you as soon as I'm comfortably settled with Elizabeth Frances Fairfax, in 45 Merton Hall.”

“ Well, so long, little sister; let me know if there's anything I can do for you and we'll spend Thanksgiving together surely at Aunt Sarah's, and may be, if you're very good, I'll come up and take you to the Harvard-Yale the week before. You wouldn't mind

2 JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

going with that good-looking room-mate of mine if I could persuade Connie Huntington to accompany me, would you? It's only a few hours' run up to Boston, but here are some chocolates and magazines in case you tire of the scenery. Be game, little girl, and above every thing else, *make good.*"

With these words Thomas Cabot swung off the train just in time to catch a near-by accommodation train to convey him to Littleton Center, where he was to join a merry house-party of young people. Jean quietly arose from her seat and watched from the car window until her brother had entirely disappeared from view, and then somewhat reluctantly turned and resumed her former seat.

Brother and sister had come from Los Angeles to New York together, he to enter upon his senior year at Yale and she to become a freshman at Ashton College. Jean was the only daughter and youngest child of a family of six. The four older brothers had been educated in the West and were determined that the two youngest children

should see something of the life and culture of the East. Mrs. Cabot had died when Jean was six, and although she had had governesses and accommodating aunts and cousins galore to consider her welfare, still most of her life had been spent in the company of her father and brothers, and when they decided that she should go East to Ashton, a small college of about five hundred strong, within twenty-five miles of Boston, she had never for one moment doubted the wisdom of their choice, and acquiesced as willingly as though Brother Will had said, "Jean, go get your racket for a set of tennis."

From Los Angeles to New York, Tom and she had kept up a continuous conversation on the "do's and don'ts" of college life, and at the end of the journey Jean felt that she had a great advantage over the other green freshmen, for she had been too carefully coached by her brother to make any serious errors. Then, too, Cousin Anna Maitlandt, a graduate of Ashton 1911, was to meet her at Boston and take her out to college to see that she made

4 JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

a good beginning amid the strange new surroundings.

Now Tom was gone, and for the first time that she could remember, Jean was alone, face to face with the first big thing in her life. She tried to read, but thoughts of home would persist in rushing in upon her, and between the lines danced little pictures of life away out in California. She wondered why she had come to college. Was it simply to please her father and brothers or did she mean to make a success of it for her own sake? She was fond of books and of study, but fond of so many other things as well. What would there be in college to take the place of her horseback rides over the ranch with the boys, her evenings with her father in his den, her tennis, her weeks in camp in the mountains, her whole free outdoor life? She knew little of girls and cared less, for up to this time they had played a small part in her life. To be sure, she had known them at St. Margaret's, her fitting school, but she had spent as little time as possible there in order to be at the call of the boys when they

needed her, and you may be sure some one of the five needed her most of the time. She was their true confidante and they told her their little business worries and successes, their love affairs, and their hopes and ambitions, for each felt that his secret was safe with her. In spite of her tender years and lack of real experience she seemed to be able to advise where many an older person would have failed. And now she was leaving them all behind and was wondering what they could do without her. The more she thought, the more the longing came over her to give it all up and go back to those she loved best.

Before she realized it two great tears were rolling down her cheeks and as she was about to wipe them away a tall, handsome girl stood before her, smiling down at her. "Isn't this Jean Cabot?" she asked, giving her hand a cordial shake. "May I sit down here and talk a little? You're going to Ashton College, aren't you? So am I. My name is Allison, Marguerite Allison, 1914. Of course you're wondering how I knew it was you. Well, I was sitting in the last

6 JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

chair of this car and saw your brother as he bade you good-by. I met Tom last year at the Yale Prom and I am sure he is going now to a house-party at Littleton Center. I've just come from there and know all about it. I was terribly disappointed not to stay over the week-end, but I'm on the House Committee and just have to be back to-morrow. You know Student Government just makes you do things. Belle Thurston, an old Ashton girl, who is giving the house-party, told me she expected Tom this evening, but he was stopping off in New York long enough to get his sister Jean started for her year at Ashton. So that's how I knew it was you. But tell me, dear, where are you going to live?"

By this time Jean's tears had dried and she had regained her usual composure and quite firmly replied, "Oh, Miss Allison, I'm so glad to know you; I was just beginning to get homesick, but you've saved my life. I'm to live in Merton, 45, with Elizabeth Frances Fairfax. I got my assignment just the day before we started."

“Merton; why, that’s my house. Isn’t it grand? ‘Forty-five’ is fourth floor and mine is 27, second floor. As for Elizabeth Frances Fairfax, she’s probably another freshman from Massachusetts; name sounds like one of those good old New England families. Massachusetts girls are all right in spite of their strict old Puritan ancestors. I’m from Cherokee, Iowa, but I haven’t been home all summer. Really I haven’t any home to go to, for my father is interested in mines and is down in Mexico most of the time. I stay with my aunt when I’m in Cherokee, but this summer I’ve been visiting some of the college girls in New York State and ended up at Littleton Center. And you’ve come all the way from Los Angeles? I thought I’d come some distance, but it’s nothing in comparison with your trip. Most of the girls at college are Easterners, but I’m sure you’ll like them after you get used to their ways.

“What studies are you going to take? Can I help you with your program? Come right into 27 as soon as we land and I’ll fix things up for you. Speaking of Massa-

8 JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

chusetts girls, you'll fall in love with my room-mate, Natalie Lawton, just the minute you see her. She's from Boston; lived there all her short life, not fifteen minutes' walk from the Boston Public Library and Copley Square. Excuse me, of course you don't know anything about Boston yet, but you will before you've been a month at Ashton. Miss Emerson, she's college president, you know, thinks there's no place on the whole earth quite like Boston, and it's her especial delight to impress upon freshmen the advantages of being so near to this wonderful city. The first time you hear her say, 'Now, girls, remember the great advantages offered to you by being in such close proximity to Boston,' you will think it rather significant, but by the time you've heard it 576 times it will begin to grow a little monotonous.

"Why, Miss Cabot, we're actually passing through Hyde Park, and we'll be in the South Station in a few minutes. Hasn't the time gone quickly? How many trunks have you and where are your checks? Let's be getting our things together. I left my luggage up in

the other end of the car, so I'll go up and collect it and be back in a minute."

"Oh, thank you, Miss Allison, but my cousin, Miss Anna Maitlandt, has promised to meet me at the train and I am sure she will help me with my trunks."

"What! Anna Maitlandt, 1911, your cousin! Why, she lived in East Hall her senior year when I was a freshman. I haven't seen her for perfect ages, but she was my crush freshman year. How good it will seem to see her again! And to think she's your cousin! How small the world is after all! Here we are — follow me and I'll keep my eye open for Anna."

The long express train was crowded, but the two girls were quickly out upon the platform and well up the track before a word was said. Marguerite was well in the lead, when all at once Jean saw her drop her bags and vigorously seize a rather petite girl, trim in her immaculate white linen suit. By the time their greetings were over, Jean had arrived on the scene and found herself as effusively greeted.

"So this is little Jean! Well, I never should have known you. Why, you're as big as Tom, and look more like a senior than a green freshie! No hazing you, my lady. Oh, what a prize for Ashton Athletic Association! What is your specialty, Jean, tennis, basket-ball or rowing? You'll make all three without half trying.

"Now, where are your trunk checks? We'll send the trunks out to Ashton at once to have them waiting for us when we arrive. I'm going to take you girls up town with me for dinner and a good talk, and Jean must go out home with me for the night. Tomorrow will be plenty early enough for her to arrive. What say'st thou, Peggy?"

"Oh, Nan, you're a perfect dear to invite me, but really I can't accept. You see I'm due out at Merton for a meeting of the House Committee to-night. I stayed down at Littleton Center till the last minute and now I've got to hustle back, for we've loads of work to plan out. Drop into 27 tomorrow as soon as you arrive and make it your headquarters until Jean's room is settled.

Come down to the Inn for lunch with me at noon. All of the old girls will be there and it will be a good opportunity to introduce Jean to them. You know there's nothing like knowing the right girls at the start.

"By the way, did you know that Bess McNeil was married last week? Oh, I'm just brim-full of news to tell you, but it will have to wait till later, for I must leave you now or I'll never catch the 5:09. So glad to have met you, Nan; seems like old times, and I think your cousin is a perfect dear. So long till to-morrow," and with this she dashed across the station to a waiting taxicab which would convey her and her bags across the city to the North Station.

Jean's trunks were soon re-checked and the two girls left the station and took an uptown electric. Before long they alighted and entered a quiet hotel where a good dinner was quickly served. Since Jean's arrival the two girls had talked a steady stream, but the conversation had centered almost entirely upon the families and home life of the two. Now, however, it changed to the more

important subject of college. Anna did most of the talking, for it took a long time to answer Jean's many questions. How much there was to be said. In fact, Anna might have sat there all night discoursing on the joys and sorrows of a college girl's life if a sweet-sounding clock had not reminded her that in a very few moments the last suburban train departed for Framington. Quickly she paid her bill and they were on their way again.

Although it was rather late when they arrived home, they found Mr. and Mrs. Maitlandt waiting for them. After a most cordial greeting, Mrs. Maitlandt suggested that they all retire, as it had been a hard day for Jean and she must be fresh and rested for her first day at college.

After the good-nights had been said, Jean found herself alone in her room a little bewildered in her new surroundings. Her poor body and head ached as she had never known them to do before. To be sure, everybody had been so good to her, but now they had all left her and for the first time since she had left home she was alone. Quickly un-

dressing she put out her electric light and went over to the window. It was a bright, starry night and as she gazed out upon its splendor a wave of homesickness swept over her and she sobbed, "Oh, father and the boys, why did I leave you? I wish I'd never promised to go to college."

CHAPTER II

HOW IT LOOKED ON WEDNESDAY

BRIGHT and early Wednesday morning, Jean was up and dressed, for the two girls had planned an early start in order to reach Ashton before noon. Mr. Maitlandt, whose business took him into Boston every day, accompanied them to the South Station and saw them safely on a North Bound elevated. They easily caught the 10:17 train for Ashton and in twelve minutes had arrived at the little station, where they found "confusion worse confounded." Girls and trunks everywhere, irate and tired expressmen trying to settle difficulties, small boys by the dozens begging to carry suitcases, wagons piled high with trunks and packing-boxes.

They waded through the crowd and, as Anna spied Mr. Chapin, the express agent, she hastened up to where he stood and said,

"Good morning, Mr. Chapin. Of course you remember me, Anna Maitlandt. No, I'm not back for post graduate; I have only come out for a few days to see that my cousin gets started properly as a freshman. Here are her trunk checks and when you have time will you please see that they are taken up to Merton, 45. Any time to-day will do, but of course we should like them as soon as possible. Thank you." And he was off again before she could say more had she wished to do so.

Just then they heard, "Why, Nan Maitlandt, what on earth are you doing out here to-day?" and a tall girl darted round a pile of trunks. "I've brought my young sister Bess to college and we're having a terrible time. Only one of her trunks has come, and not a thing in it that she really wants. We've been arguing with old Chapie for an hour, but it doesn't do one bit of good."

"Nell, how like old times it seems. You always were in some kind of trouble all our four years and it wouldn't be you if something wasn't wrong. How many times do

you suppose you lost one of your trunks, or books, or hats, or themes, or tennis rackets? But you always found them sooner or later and I'm confident your sister's trunk will turn up all right. I want you to know my cousin, Jean Cabot, from Los Angeles. She and your sister will be in the same class. Jean is to live in Merton. Where is Bess assigned?"

"Poor child, she didn't make the campus this year and is to room first semester at Mrs. McAllister's, but I hope second half she will get in East or Wellington, for you know so many drop out at midyear's that there's always a chance. How long will you be here? Can't you come down to the Cottage with your cousin?"

"Thanks, Nell, but I expect to be very busy and I'm only here for a few days. You know I begin hospital work at the Massachusetts General the first of October and I need every minute at home. But I'll try to see you somewhere if it's only for a few minutes. I want to hear all about yourself and the other girls."

It took but a few moments to leave the little station and its confusion behind them and Jean said, "Why, Anna, are we the last ones to arrive? Everybody seems to be at the station."

"No, child, they're mostly freshmen. The upper-class girls won't arrive until to-night or early in the morning. You know to-morrow is registration day and classes won't meet until Friday and Saturday. Now look straight ahead of you up the hill and you will get your first view of the campus. Let me tell you some of the buildings even if you don't remember them all. That tower is the chapel; the trees hide the building itself, but we shall see it better as we climb the hill. The white building is the new library, not quite finished as yet; to the right is East, next to that College Hall; opposite is Wellington; those dark-red buildings are the laboratories and away over beyond is Merton. We will walk slowly up Faculty Row and get a closer view. The rest of the dormitories are on the other side of the hill. Don't you love the hill already? Aren't the trees wonderful?

The leaves are just beginning to turn and soon will be at their best. Wait till you see the ivy on the chapel in its brilliant autumn coloring. Before long you'll be racking your poor brain to sing its praises, for every one in Lit. I has to write a sonnet on the glory of the ivy on the chapel tower. Miss Whiting, 'prof' in Lit. I, is daffy on the subject and you'll find her any time in the fall lingering in the shadows of the tower and rhapsodizing on its beauty.

"Here's 'Prexy's' house. Isn't it dear? It was finished only last year and modeled after a little English house in Stratford-on-Avon where Miss Emerson spent several summers. Miss Thurston, the dean, lives there with her. Be sure you get on the right side of Miss Thurston, freshman year, Jean, and then you'll be safe for the other three."

"Other three! Why, Anna Maitlandt, I've only come to college for this one year. Nothing on earth could make me stay any longer. I've made up my mind on that subject, and when a Cabot once makes up his mind he never changes it. I'll do the best

I can this year, but when June comes you can be sure I'll start for home on the very first train and stay there the rest of my life."

"Oh, Jean, college hasn't begun yet. Wait till midyear's and I'll wager by that time you'll be the most enthusiastic freshman on the hill, with room-mate chosen and plans all made for sophomore year. College life grows on you, and once it has made a start you can't stop it. I'm not going to give you a bit of advice now, but just before I leave I've a word or two for you.

"Here we are at old Merton. We have talked so much I forgot to point out the other buildings. How do you like the looks of your new home? I tried four of the dormitories and liked this the best of them all and Mrs. Thompson is a gem of a matron. Let's go right in and see her now."

Mrs. Thompson's rooms were on the first floor opposite the parlors and reading-room. She was a large, cheery woman who welcomed the girls in a way that made them feel at home instantly.

"We haven't begun our regular meals yet for so few of the girls are here, but I should be pleased to have you both lunch with me in my sitting-room."

"Thank you, Mrs. Thompson, but we have promised to go down to the Inn. Has Miss Fairfax, who is to be Miss Cabot's roommate, arrived yet?"

"No; we received word this morning that owing to sickness in her family she may be delayed several days. So if you like, Miss Maitlandt, you may be Miss Cabot's roommate until the real one arrives."

"Thanks; it will be quite like old days to be rooming again in Merton. We'll go up directly, Jean," and they darted up the stairs. "Let's stop in Peggy's room on second for a minute."

Stopping before 27, Anna gave a vigorous knock and receiving no response opened the door and entered the room, followed by Jean. Evidently both of the occupants had arrived, for the room was in perfect order and presented a most attractive appearance. Anna walked over to one of the desks and found

a note addressed to herself. Opening it she read aloud:

"DEAR NAN: Natalie and I couldn't resist the call of the game and we're up on the courts for a set of tennis. Meet us at the Inn at one o'clock sharp. Hastily, PEG."

"Those two are fiends at tennis and Natalie won the college championship last year and she was only a sophomore. Generally it goes to a senior; in fact, Natalie is the first under-class girl to win the honor. Wait till she's up against you, Jean. Oh, I have it, there's something for you to work for. Why not be the first and only Ashton freshman to win the Tennis Championship? You can do it if you try. Why, Tom says you are the speediest girl player he ever saw, and for a fellow to admit that a girl can play tennis means more than anything else I know of.

"Well, what do you think of their rooms? The bedroom is just off at this side. Evidently their enthusiasm waned when they finished the study, for clothes are piled mountain high on their beds. It isn't fair to criti-

cize first day, though, so let's up to fourth."

As they walked slowly up the stairs, Jean said a little hesitatingly, "Why, cousin, our rooms will never look like that unless my room-mate has all those pretty things. I haven't any pictures except father's and the boys' and they had pictures everywhere. And I haven't any flags or tea-table or chafing-dish or pillows or anything attractive."

"Never mind that, Jean; it's easy enough to get such things. We'll put the necessary things in order and then make a list of the other things you want, and a trip in town to-morrow will purchase them all. Most girls are not as fortunate as you in the matter of money, for I know you can have anything money will buy. So don't worry about it at all. Take my word for it, don't have too much in your room. The simpler the arrangement, the better. First-year girls are apt to fill every inch of space with pictures and souvenirs that senior year they would be ashamed to own. You can always tell an upper-class girl's room at first glance. You

notice for yourself and see what it is that makes a room attractive to you, and I think in the end you will agree with me.

"Why, 45 is locked and we haven't the key. You wait a minute here and I'll run down and see Mrs. Thompson. Sit down on the suit-cases and I'll be back before you can count ten."

But it was a good ten minutes before Anna returned, for she evidently had some difficulty in finding the matron. For about five minutes Jean sat alone and thought of everything but college, then she leaned back against the wall and closed her eyes, for excitement had tired her a bit. Suddenly a loud laugh aroused her and she heard, "Well, I never, a freshman asleep at the switch! What's the matter, stranger, can I help you?"

"No, thank you; I'm waiting for some one to come and unlock my door. We couldn't find the key. My cousin has gone to find Mrs. Thompson."

"Well, in the meantime, come right over into my room. I'm to live just opposite. My name's Remington, Midge, or, more

properly speaking, Marjorie Remington, 1915. Of course I'm a sophomore and your hated enemy, but that needn't make any difference yet. Leave your bags right there. Now sit down wherever you can find room. Looks pretty bad round here, doesn't it, but you see I only arrived this morning. I've a single this year. Couldn't stand another room-mate. Nearly died last year with the three I had. First girl flunked out at Thanksgiving, second's mother died and she left at midyear's, and the rest of the time I had the greasiest grind in the class to live with. I never studied and she always wanted to, so there was trouble from the start. How are you on the study question?"

Before Jean could answer she heard Anna hurrying up the hall and she excused herself quickly. The door of 45 was soon opened and the room indeed presented a desolate appearance. To be sure, it was clean and large and had plenty of windows, but the pieces of furniture were merely stacked up in the center in one huge pile.

Jean simply gasped "Oh!" but before she

could finish, Anna said, "Put everything down in the corner and come over here and see the view." Indeed, from the southeast corner window there was a wonderful view of the surrounding country, and as here and there Anna pointed out interesting places, Jean's attention was drawn from the bareness and unattractiveness of the room to the beauty of the landscape.

"Now we'll not do a thing here until after lunch and then we'll work like Trojans and get the place livable. How's your appetite? I'm nearly starved. It's almost one o'clock, so we'll have to hustle to meet the girls on time."

When they arrived at the Inn they found it thronged with girls, but Marguerite was waiting for them and said that she had reserved a table and that Natalie was waiting inside. They entered the dining-room and were immediately seated in an extreme corner near a large window. Introductions were soon over and Jean thought Natalie the most attractive girl she had yet seen. She was her exact opposite in every way, small, dark,

with large dancing brown eyes and an abundance of wavy brown hair. Her face and arms were brown as berries and just now, when violent exercise had flushed her cheeks, the heightened color came and went as she talked. Immediately she and Jean found a common subject of conversation in tennis and Jean talked as she had not done before with any one. Girls came up to their table with pleasant words of greeting and passed on and before Jean was quite aware of it lunch was over and they were on their way back to Merton.

Natalie and Jean walked together and soon Jean was telling her all about the ranch and her early life there. When they reached the dormitory the two juniors insisted upon going up to 45 to help put things in order. "You know we juniors are your staunchest friends, even-year classes against the odd years," said Natalie.

So up the stairs went the four and took possession of 45. They first chose the bedroom furniture and placed it in the small adjoining room. There were two white beds,

two chiffoniers and two small chairs. To tell the truth, the room could hardly have held any more, and it required some care to place this amount so that there was any walking space. "We can't make up the beds until your trunks are unpacked, so let's tackle the study," said Peggy.

Out in the other room there was one large study-table, two small book-cases, two desks, a large couch, and two comfortable rockers. Just as they were moving some of these into place there was a knock at the door, and Joe, the colored janitor, announced the arrival of Jean's trunks. These he put in the middle of the room and unstrapped them.

"What! Three trunks? Aren't you the lucky girl to have enough to put in them? It's all I can do to fill one," said Peggy Allison, whose love of clothes was her greatest failing.

"Father insisted upon Aunt Molly's superintending my wardrobe, and all summer long I've done nothing but try on clothes until I don't care whether I ever see any more or not. That largest trunk has the few things

I brought for my room." From the top of the trunk she lifted one box very carefully and showed the three girls the pictures of "her family" as she called the five. Surely they were splendid examples of American manhood, and one could not blame any girl for being loath to leave them.

"Sometime soon I'm coming up to visit you, Miss Cabot, and I want you to tell me all about your family and especially this member of it," and Peggy held up the picture of the second son, Nelson Cabot, a somewhat serious-looking fellow.

"Oh, Nels? Why, he's coming east on business in the winter and he has promised to spend a week in Boston and give me the time of my young life, as he says. Of course he'll come out here, and then you can see him and judge for yourself. We all call him our 'serious brother,' but he's got fun in him just the same when he gets started.

"Now let's make out a list of the things you really think I need for my room. I'll do my share before my room-mate appears and she'll find such a comfortable room that she'll

be glad I arrived first. Now I want a tea-table and 'fixings' like yours, Peggy, and a chafing-dish, some ferns, rugs, curtains, pictures, a couch-cover, chairs"—and the girls added one thing and another to the list until it was a very long one. Jean detested shopping, and Anna made a most welcome promise to help her out with the difficulties the following afternoon.

The two juniors were to be busy in the evening, so, left to themselves, Jean and Anna enjoyed a long walk after supper. As they returned across the campus, lights twinkled in the windows of the dormitories, happy voices and the occasional burst of music floated out on the still evening air. Once Anna stood perfectly still for several moments and then exclaimed almost to herself, "Oh, how I love it all! How I wish I were just beginning college! Oh, Ashton, how much you have done for me!"

Then with scarcely a word they approached old Merton and climbed slowly to 45. "I told you, Jean, that before I left I was going to give you a little advice. It's

30 JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

only this, Go slowly, choose the best of everything, make the best of everything and love old Ashton better than anything else in the world."

CHAPTER III

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

JEAN awoke with a start and sat straight up in bed. "Don't be alarmed, Jean," said Anna; "it isn't a fire; just the rising bell which rings every morning at ten minutes before seven. There's another one at seven and the breakfast bell at half-past. Of course no one needs forty minutes to dress for breakfast, and before long you will be able to do it in five, or ten at the most. Meals are served promptly here and Mrs. Thompson is very particular about having every one on time. So if you do oversleep I warn you that you'll get no breakfast unless you keep a good supply of food in your room. And there's danger in that, too, for mice fairly haunt these rooms, especially the closets and behind the radiators, for that's a favorite dumping place for crumbs. I remember the winter that our room seemed to be a regular

gathering-place for them, and once when I had one of the girls from home out here over night we had a merry chase with five from under our beds before we could get any sleep. One morning not long after that my roommate found one in her bed when she was making it up. She never knew whether it had been there all night or not, but she very carefully examined her bed ever after that before she got into it.

“ Well, suppose we arise and take plenty of time to dress this morning and make our best appearance at the breakfast table. You know first impressions are often lasting and as most of the girls here are upper-class girls I want them to see you at your best. Of course, dear, you always look well; you can’t help it any more than you can help breathing, but this is a special occasion. Wear one of those good-looking white linens I saw you hang up in the closet last night. I must say I admire your Aunt Molly’s choice of materials and dressmaker, judging from the clothes I’ve seen so far. You must open the other trunk and show me your best gowns before I depart.

And by the way, Jean, that must be to-night. We'll start in town early and have a good afternoon of it and I'll leave you at the North Station on the right train for Ashton. You won't mind the short ride out here alone, will you? I'd love to stay the rest of the week, but you know how little time I have left to finish my preparations for the hospital, and I wouldn't be found deficient for anything.

"Of course you take a cold bath every morning; any one could tell that just to look at you. Well, hustle into the bath-room now, for I just heard some one leave it. When you're finished, please draw the water for me."

As the two girls entered the long dining-room they found most of the seats at table occupied, for they were a bit late in spite of their thirty minutes. However, Mrs. Thompson was always lenient first mornings and greeted them with a pleasant smile. "You will sit at the end of the second table, Miss Cabot, and your cousin may sit beside you this morning, as Miss White, who will have that seat permanently, has not yet arrived."

“ Oh, I had hoped that would be my roommate's seat. Where will she sit? ”

“ Why, of course you didn't know that Miss Fairfax is to wait on table here and so will not have a regular table seat.”

At these words Jean's expression changed and she looked so astonished that Anna said softly, “ You know, dear, some of the girls who haven't much money pay their board by waiting on table. Lots of girls do it, and it's perfectly all right. Some of the best girls I ever knew worked their way through college.” Jean said nothing, but she was bitterly disappointed. Why couldn't her roommate have been Miss Remington or some one equally attractive? She was already beginning to wish that she'd been fortunate enough to draw a single room.

If Nan Maitlandt had wished to have her cousin make a favorable impression on the other girls in Merton she certainly succeeded in doing so. Jean was tall and broad-shouldered, with a splendidly developed figure, a perfect picture of health and strength. She had masses of yellow hair which she wore this

morning coiled in thick braids round her well-shaped head. Her eyes were dark and her skin, naturally fair, was now somewhat tanned from her out-of-door life. She wore a severe white linen dress with a turned down collar and a bow of black which set off her style of beauty to perfection. She carried herself well and with head held high in the air she had entered the room almost unconscious of its occupants. The girls stared for a moment and then whispered comments on her beauty and wondered who she could be. Mrs. Thompson soon went the rounds of the tables introducing the new girls until at length everybody knew everybody else.

There were about a hundred girls seated at the three long tables and only here and there appeared a vacant seat. At Jean's table there were five freshmen besides herself, and much to her satisfaction she soon discovered her acquaintance of the day before, Miss Remington, half way down the other side of the table. Peggy Allison and her room-mate were at the first table at the opposite end from Jean, but they waved her a hearty welcome, even at that

distance. She looked at the girls around her laughing and talking and seeming so perfectly at home and she had to admit to herself that they were a happy lot and if so many girls found college such good fun there ought to be something in it for her. Most of the conversation at her end of the table seemed to be on summer vacations and proposed studies for the coming year. Just beyond Nan sat a freshman named Miss Samson, who after some deliberation found the courage to lean forward a little and ask Jean if she had decided what studies to take. Jean answered cordially in the negative and added that her cousin was to help her choose them later on. She was conditioned in French, so she supposed she'd have to take that, although she hated it thoroughly.

After breakfast the girls collected here and there about the reading-room and halls in little groups. Miss Remington came up at once to where Jean was standing and talked casually about her room and trunks and then asked her how long her cousin would remain with her. Upon hearing that she was to leave that

evening she promised to spend the night with Jean, so she wouldn't get lonesome. Jean was delighted, for to herself she admitted that Marjorie appealed much more to her than any of the other girls she had met, excepting, perhaps, Natalie Lawton. She hoped they were going to be good friends even if they were not in the same class.

Registration was to be at ten o'clock and Nan suggested that they go up to 45 and talk over studies before Jean made out her programme. She had arranged some tennis with Peggy and Natalie at ten-thirty and then after lunch they would take the first train for Boston. Nan had been a good, all-around girl in college, but had maintained a high standard in her studies and was anxious to have Jean do the same, but she was discovering that Jean cared very little for her books. Every freshman was required to take English and mathematics and had the choice of the other subjects. As Jean had been conditioned in French her cousin suggested that she begin at once to remove the condition. By satisfactorily completing a course in French at the end of the

year this could be done. Jean agreed to this and then after much discussion she decided to add German, oratory and music to the list, with gymnasium work twice a week. Mathematics and German were to come Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings; French and English, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings; oratory once a week on a day to be announced later; "gym" two hours each on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and music two hours a week when she could arrange it with the instructor.

"That looks like a pretty stiff programme to me, Nan," said Jean; "I don't see any time in the week for anything but studying. A girl can't study all the time, you know. I want to do other things, too."

"You will find plenty of time for other things, dear, for this isn't a very hard programme. You will find any number of girls taking more than you have. You'll have every Saturday afternoon free, and generally the girls go in town to the theater that day. Boston always has all the best plays and music and there are Wednesday matinées, too. I

don't advise cutting recitations, but once in a while when there's something worth while it won't do any harm. Then, Friday afternoon is Symphony rehearsal, which you must hear once in a while. The faculty very often advise the girls to attend certain performances and are very willing to chaperon them. Speaking of the faculty, I think you are going to enjoy all of yours, for I had them all with the exception of Miss Whittemore, the gym instructor, who is new this year, and I can vouch for them. My advice is to work hard at the beginning of the year, get the principles of the study and a good foundation and the second half-year will come easy. Don't let things slide, for it's awfully hard to make up a lot of work in a short time. If you must cut classes or chapel, cut consistently. Tomorrow morning you will meet some of the instructors and have lessons assigned for next week. Things will hardly be in running order before a week, so you can take your own time for a few days. Now we'll start for the office and get registration off our hands. Is your programme written out carefully; ready

to pass in to the clerk? Let's stop for the other freshmen on our way downstairs so we can all go together."

Nan and her six charges hurried up the hill as the college clock rang out its ten strokes. The office was crowded and each girl had to pass in single file before the registrar. It took some time for Jean to reach the desk and when at length it was her turn to sign her name to the great book and pass her programme to the waiting clerk she gave a sigh of relief. Now she was a freshman and the year had actually begun, and there was no turning back. Hurriedly the six girls were shown over College Hall and Nan pointed out the mathematics room and then the French room and so on until they all knew where to go on the following days. In one of the rooms on the third floor they met Miss Whiting, and as Nan had always enjoyed her courses in spite of some rather marked peculiarities, she was glad to stop and talk with her and have her know her charges. They talked a few moments, long enough to have her ask the girls if they had yet seen the ivy

on the chapel tower. Nan had to admit that as yet they had not, pleading as her excuse that she wished them to see the chapel for the first time the following day at chapel exercises. Remembering her tennis appointment, Nan invited the other freshmen to accompany Jean and herself to the courts, but as they had their rooms to settle and letters to write they returned to the hall.

Soon the two reached the courts and found plenty of girls enjoying the game. They had time for two sets in which Jean showed her skill and she and Nan easily defeated their opponents, causing Peggy to exclaim, "You see, Nat, it's as I said, you'll have to work hard for championship next year."

The afternoon passed all too quickly for Jean. Nan knew just what stores to shop in and just what to buy and before she realized it the long list had been bought and ordered to be sent out to Merton. They had time for tea in a quiet little English tea room which Nan often frequented, and here she told Jean some of her own plans for the future and how she had decided to take up hospital work.

Her conversation revealed quite another girl from the light-hearted one of the last two days, and Jean found herself admiring her cousin more than ever.

"You must come in to see me whenever I have time off and you can arrange it. I shall feel the greatest interest in your life at college, for in a way I feel responsible for it. There are many things I might have told you, but I am going to let you meet problems and solve them by yourself. Now we must start for the station or we'll miss the train."

When they reached the station Nan said that she knew they would find friends on the train, but Jean pleaded to be left alone, for she wanted to think things over by herself. Nan stayed until the train pulled out of sight and then gayly started homeward, saying to herself, "I'll bet on Jean every time. She'll have no end of trouble, but she'll come out all right in the end."

When the train drew into the Ashton Station Jean alighted with the others and as she stepped off the train she found Marjorie Remington waiting for her.

"I thought you'd be out on this train, so I came down to meet you." So saying, she put her arm through Jean's in a friendly manner and they started up the hill.

"Supper isn't for half an hour yet; let's take a walk and see the sunset from the hill. I never stay in the 'dorm' when there's any possible excuse for being out of doors. Thank goodness there's no lessons until next week. Have you promised to do anything Saturday afternoon?"

"No," said Jean.

"Well, I want you to spend it with me then in town. I'll get tickets for 'The Spring Maid'; everybody's wild about it. Are you fond of the theater?"

"Yes, but I've never been very often except once in a while with father or one of my brothers. We live some distance out of the city and it's pretty hard getting home after the theater."

"Oh, I'm just crazy over it, and never miss a Saturday afternoon if I can help it."

"I'm going to ask Mrs. Thompson if I can change seats with Miss White and sit next to

you at table. I've no use for the girls who sit on either side of me and I'd much rather sit beside you. Let's go to supper now, this walk has made me hungry as a bear. Wait a minute in the hall while I speak to Mrs. Thompson about changing."

When Marjorie returned she looked anything but pleased and exclaimed, "Just like her, says she has assigned the seats and doesn't want to change them even for one meal. Well, I sha'n't tell her that we're going to room together to-night, for I suppose she'd put her foot down on that, too. She's certainly the crankiest individual I ever ran up against."

As the two girls entered the dining-room, arm in arm, several of the older girls smiled and looked knowingly at each other. Peggy Allison seemed a bit worried, as she whispered to Natalie, "Midge Remington's up to her old game again, always appropriating the best-looking girl in the place. We'd better look out or we'll lose this Jean Cabot."

After supper, one of the girls went over to

the piano and began playing a dreamy waltz. The chairs were moved to one side and several of the girls began to dance. Natalie came up to Jean and asked her for the waltz. "You'll have to lead, Miss Cabot, you're so tall. Why, it will be almost as good as dancing with a man, you're so big and strong."

"I don't know how to lead, Miss Lawton. I never have danced with girls before."

"Well, I'll show you over here at one side. You'll have to content yourself here dancing with girls, for we only have men on state occasions, which are few and far between." And the two left the others for a little lesson in leading. It did not take Jean long to learn, and soon they were swinging over the floor with the others.

"Why, Miss Lawton," exclaimed Jean as the music stopped, "I wouldn't have believed it could be such fun to dance with girls and lead. Won't she play some more music?"

"Yes, we generally dance half an hour after supper every evening and the girls take turns playing. Will you play for us some

times? Nan says you play beautifully. In Merton we believe in making every girl do all she can for the good of the rest. If I don't see you again while you're dancing I want to invite you down to 27 Saturday evening to meet some of my friends and a few of the freshmen. I hope your room-mate will have arrived by that time; if so, please invite her for me, although I shall try to see her myself. Thanks for this splendid dance." And she hastened on to another freshman.

Jean had plenty of opportunities to dance and at the last dance Marjorie Remington came up to her and said, "Now for my turn. I've been waiting patiently all the evening. You seem to be in great demand."

After the dance was finished the two girls went up to Marjorie's room; several of the other girls dropped in and made themselves comfortable in the rather close quarters.

"Have some chocolates, girls," said Marjorie as she passed them a large five-pound Huyler's box. "Wasn't it good of Jack to leave this with me at the train?" Everybody but Jean seemed to know who Jack was, but

she asked no questions and the conversation changed from one subject to another. Suddenly there came a knock at the door. As Marjorie opened it the girls saw Mrs. Thompson standing in the hall with a shy, timid girl behind her.

"Is Miss Cabot in your room, Miss Remington? I saw you go up the stairs together. I should like her to meet her room-mate, Miss Fairfax, who has just arrived."

Jean left the room and the merry group assembled there and went somewhat reluctantly into 45. Introductions were soon over and Mrs. Thompson left the two girls together. Jean soon learned that it was Elizabeth's brother who had been ill with typhoid fever, but his condition was so much improved that she was no longer needed at home. She was very tired, for it had been five long weeks that she had helped to care for him, but she felt she must leave for college as soon as possible in order not to miss any more than was absolutely necessary. Could she go to bed at once, she asked, and leave all her unpacking until the next day? Jean helped her as best she

could and before long she was sound asleep in the little white bed and Jean stole softly back into Marjorie's room.

The girls had left and she found Marjorie propped up on the couch writing a letter.

"Come right in. I'm only writing to Jack to thank him for the chocolates. Well, isn't it a shame to have our plans for to-night spoiled? What do you think of your roommate? Isn't she awful? Worse than any of mine. Did you notice her hat? Where do you suppose she hails from? Hard luck for you, that's all I've got to say. Well, make yourself at home in my room any time you want to, whether I'm here or not."

"Yes, she is a disappointment, but perhaps things will look different in the morning. Good night, I guess I'm tired, too," and Jean left the room and was soon sleeping quietly in the other white bed in 45.

CHAPTER IV

THE FRESHMAN RECEPTION

ALTHOUGH Elizabeth was as careful as possible, her moving to and fro between the two rooms awakened Jean, who, after wishing her good-morning, offered to arise and help unpack.

“No, Miss Cabot,” replied Elizabeth, “it’s only five o’clock; please don’t think of getting up yet. I am used to rising early, for I’ve been up every morning all summer at five. I’m sorry to have disturbed you. Can’t you get to sleep again? You know I’m to wait on table this year and Mrs. Thompson wishes me to be in the dining-room at seven to help in setting the table. I thought I would unpack my trunk and suit-case before breakfast, for there will be so much for me to do to-day I probably won’t have another opportunity. If you will tell me where to put things I can get right at work now. Would you mind if I

called you by your first name, it seems so strange to say 'Miss' to the girl I'm to live with all the year? My name is Elizabeth."

Instantly Jean arose and put on a white silk kimona, splashed with great pink roses, slipped her feet into some dainty pink silk quilted slippers and then led the way into the study, where she sat down in the only empty chair. "Why, of course I want you to call me by my first name, Elizabeth; it's Jean. How do you like the arrangement of the rooms so far? My cousin and two of the juniors helped me with it. It looks very bare, but we bought a lot of things in town yesterday and as soon as they are sent out we can finish settling. That is your desk and bookcase and here is your clothes closet. I borrowed one or two of your hooks, for I couldn't seem to find room enough in my own closet. I'll take the dresses down now and put them back in the trunk."

"Oh, please don't, Jean; all my dresses together won't fill the hooks on one side of the closet. You're welcome to this whole side."

"Thank you. Now you can put your pictures

and banners anywhere you choose. We want to make our room as attractive as possible so our friends will be glad to come and see us."

"I'm afraid I haven't many attractive things for the room. I didn't know much about college girls' rooms, and besides if I had known I couldn't have brought them. Father is only a country doctor and could hardly afford to send me to college at all. It will be a struggle to go through the four years, but I mean to do it if hard work counts.

"I've never known a real mother, for two years after mother's death my father married again when I was six and Brother four. Since then we've had a home and that's about all as far as a mother's concerned. Father is away most of the time and doesn't know all that happens during his absence, but we know and never can forget. Fathers don't seem to understand children very well. Perhaps Brother and I have been more to each other than most brothers and sisters, for we had to make up for all that we missed in others. That's the hardest thing for me in coming to Ashton — to leave Brother at home sick with the fever.

He means to go to college, too, sometime, and after two years here I hope to be able to teach at home and help him with his education. I don't know why I'm telling you all this, for I guess it doesn't interest you at all."

"Yes, it does, Elizabeth, for my mother is dead, too, and I have five brothers and the best father in all the world, and I'm here to please them, but you can believe I'm going back to them after one year of it."

"What! You could go four years and graduate if you wanted to, and instead you're only going freshman year? Why, I'd give everything in the world if I could go through the four years. I've thought of asking permission to take extra work this year and next, and then if anything should happen that I could come back a third year I could do the four years' work in three and graduate. I want a college diploma so much I'll do anything to get it. But if it's a question of Brother's giving up a year or of my doing so, it will not be he, for it seems as though he were always the one to make the sacrifice.

"Have you decided what you are to take

this year? There are so many things I want to take I hardly know what to choose. Tell me your programme. Wouldn't it be fine if we had the same courses, then we could study together?"

"I'm going to take as little as I can, for I hate studying. I think my cousin Nan has made me out too stiff a programme and I'll have to drop something before I flunk out. I want to keep up my music, anyway, and practising does take a lot of time. Besides, I have English and mathematics and German and French and of course oratory and gym, because they're snap courses."

"I shall take Latin instead of your French, but the other subjects are what I want, too. In place of your music I'd like some history, for that's my favorite study. I've read everything I could lay my hands on in the history line and never could get half enough. I've longed for the college library with its rows upon rows of books. If ever I'm missing, be sure to look for me in the library. Do you suppose my being a day late will make any difference with my work?"

“No, child, for all we did yesterday was to register and pass in our programmes. You sent them word that you were delayed at home by sickness in the family and won't be fined, but ordinarily when we fail to register on time we are fined five dollars. To-day we are to go to the classes which usually meet on Friday. I have mathematics at nine and German at ten, and probably you will be in the same divisions. It's mighty hard to think of studying these glorious days. How I'd enjoy a twenty-mile horseback ride over the hills this morning! I wonder where I could hire a horse and if any of the other girls ride.”

“Why! you wouldn't cut your recitations the very first day, would you, Jean?”

“No, I suppose not, but I'd like to mighty well. Don't be surprised at anything I ever do. Sometimes I fear I can't stand this living by rules and regulations. I've always done just what I wanted to and when I wanted to, and I shall probably forget to ask permission to do things, especially of other girls. I'm not so sure that I approve of student government.”

“ Why, it seems to me the fairest way, and I’m sure you will like it after you become used to it. Now that I’ve finished unpacking I think I’ll just write a few lines to Brother, for he’ll be waiting very impatiently for my first letter. Can’t you go to sleep again? ”

“ No, I think I’ll write letters, too. I haven’t had a minute before, and I promised Tom and father faithfully that I’d write to them.” And soon the two girls were writing as though their life depended upon it, and did not stop until the rising bell sounded. Elizabeth was as startled as Jean had been on the previous morning, but it did not take long to explain it to her. Soon she started downstairs for her duties in the dining-room, but hesitated a little and said, “ Jean, may I go to chapel with you this morning? ”

“ Yes, we freshmen in the house agreed last night to go together; our seats are to be in the right aisle directly back of the sophs. They say ours is the largest entering class on record, so some of us may have to sit in the annex. Let’s go by a quarter-past eight, anyway, so as to be in the main chapel. After

chapel exercises I'll take you to the office and help you with your registration."

When the seven freshmen from Merton walked up to chapel, six of them felt very green indeed, but Jean held her head high and displayed her usual composure. But when they took their places with the other three classes and at a given signal rose while the hundred or so seniors in cap and gown marched slowly down the center aisle to their seats on the left, Jean felt for the first time the insignificance of a freshman and wondered just how it would seem to be a senior.

Miss Emerson welcomed the incoming class in such a way that Jean felt drawn to her at once. She was not at all what she had pictured a college president to be, and there was something so sweet and lovable about her that Jean thought she came nearer to the mother she had always pictured to herself than anybody else she had ever seen. Most of the faculty seats were occupied, and Jean noticed that many of the professors were young and good-looking in spite of their degrees and reputed knowledge.

THE FRESHMAN RECEPTION 57

After chapel Jean and Elizabeth hastened to the registrar's office and Elizabeth was enrolled as a freshman. Just as they were leaving the building two seniors in cap and gown stopped them and one of them said, "This is Miss Cabot and her room-mate, Miss Fairfax, is it not? I am Miss Wright and this is Miss Farnsworth. We would like to invite you to be our special guests at the senior reception to the freshmen and faculty on a week from Monday evening in the Gym. You live in Merton, I believe? We will call for you there at about half-past eight."

The two freshmen were glad to accept the invitation, and after a few general remarks about recitations the seniors hurried away.

"Jean, did you notice the little star-shaped pins both of those seniors wore on their shirt-waists? What are they for?"

"I suppose they must be their society pins. Societies are like fraternities in the men's colleges. They are secret organizations, and about twenty-five girls belong to each one. I don't know much about them except what Tom told me."

"Oh," said Elizabeth, "I should like to join one, wouldn't you?"

"I guess it isn't for us to say, Elizabeth. You see, the girls are very particular whom they ask, and only a few are chosen from each class."

"Oh, you'll be chosen, Jean; you needn't worry about that."

"I'm not so sure about it. I suppose it will soon be time for mathematics. O dear, how I dread it! Your division doesn't meet to-day, does it? You ought to be thankful for that. I'm going upstairs now to see where Room 21 is. Good-by; see you later."

At the top of the stairs she met Marjorie Remington, who stopped her. "Oh, Miss Cabot, have you received your invitation to the freshman reception yet?"

"Yes, Miss Wright and Miss Farnsworth just stopped Elizabeth and me downstairs and invited us to go with them."

"Oh, you should feel much honored, for they are two of the most popular girls in the senior class, and Miss Wright is class presi-

dent. But I think the reception is an awful bore, just standing around and meeting a lot of girls and faculty you don't care anything about, and dancing in between times. Still a freshman makes a big mistake to cut it, and I advise you to go.

"What's your first recitation — can I take you to the class room? There's the bell now. But wait a minute. Here comes a girl I want you to meet. It's Lill Spalding, sophomore basket-ball captain and one of the nicest girls in North Hall. I've invited her in town with us to-morrow."

The three girls became so interested in their plans for the following day that Mathematics I. was almost forgotten, and when Marjorie remembered she was to show Jean the room it was fully five minutes after the hour.

Stopping before a door marked "21" Marjorie said, "Here it is, and Miss Hooper is in charge. Oh, she's fierce; I pity you. I had Miss Baldwin, who's a regular cinch. I'll meet you here at the end of the hour if you like."

As Jean entered the room Miss Hooper was just reading the class list and she heard "Miss Cabot" ring out distinctly in the stillness of the large room.

"Here," said Jean, and she sank into the only vacant chair in the front row directly in front of the desk.

Miss Hooper paused, looked up quickly from her class book and said sharply, "Five minutes late. A very bad beginning, Miss Cabot; remember hereafter, please, that this class meets promptly at nine o'clock."

It was on Jean's tongue to say that she had lost her way, but something restrained her. Miss Hooper explained that the work of the year would be divided into three parts, algebra the first third of the year, geometry the second, and trigonometry the last. The class were to use Wells's College Algebra, which they could buy at the college book-store. The first lesson would be the problems on page 47.

"And now, class, let us spend the rest of the hour reviewing a little. Miss Cabot, you may explain what is meant by the 'binomial theorem.'"

Poor Jean tried to collect her scattered senses enough to answer the question. She remembered there was such a thing as this binomial theorem, but what it was she could not have told had her life depended upon it. After waiting as long as she dared she answered in a low voice, "I do not know." Miss Hooper looked annoyed and repeated the question to Miss Caldow, next on the list, who, to Jean's disgust, jumped on her feet and recited glibly and entirely to Miss Hooper's satisfaction.

"Very well done, Miss Caldow. I see no reason why the entire class should not be perfectly familiar with the theorem. No one can expect to do any kind of work in advanced algebra unless she has a thorough foundation in the elementary work. Miss Cabot, you will please look up the binomial theorem and be prepared to recite it at the next meeting of the class."

Jean thought the hour would never end, but when at last the class was excused she rushed from the room almost into the arms of Marjorie Remington who was waiting for her

just outside the door. "Well, honey, how did Mathematics I. go?"

"Terribly. I never want to see Miss Hooper again and I'll not take her old mathematics course another day. I don't know anything about algebra, and she pounced on me first one to explain the binomial theorem, and because I didn't know it she insulted me before the whole class."

"Just like her. Isn't she the most sarcastic person you ever knew? She can say more hateful things in fifteen minutes than any one I know. Why don't you drop mathematics and take something else in its place? You can take it up again next year."

"Next year, indeed; thank goodness I'll be far away from Ashton College by that time! One year's enough for me. But tell me, can I really drop mathematics?"

"Sure you can. I dropped Latin the first day last year and I'm just beginning it again, but I doubt if I ever pass it. All you've got to do is to go down to the office and give some reasonable excuse for dropping mathematics and offer something else in its place. They

don't care when you take the required subjects as long as you finish them before senior year."

"But what can I take instead of mathematics?"

"Miss Cushing has a fine course in philosophy first half-year, and psychology second half. It's a lecture course, only her exams are stiff, but if you read up in her book in the library you'll get by all right. If you're only going to be here one year you don't care much for making records, do you?"

"No. Leave that to my room-mate, she's out for real study and nothing else. Aren't we the great combination? But still there's something about her I like; and I pity her, too, for she's had a hard time all her life. I nearly forgot, I have a German recitation now, so I'll have to leave the mathematics proposition until later."

German was delightful, as Fräulein Weimer in her broken English explained the work of the year and then talked to the class in German, telling them stories and quoting poems. Jean felt a little calmer as she left the room, but with the memory of her first recitation still

burning in her mind she hurried to the office. She explained to the secretary that she felt so poorly prepared in mathematics that she wished to leave that work until another year and take philosophy in its place. She understood that mathematics, although a required subject, could be taken any one of the first three years. She was given permission to do as she wished, and hastened to Miss Cushing's room to make further arrangements. In the hall she met Miss Hooper, who stopped her and said, "Am I right in understanding that Miss Anna Maitlandt is your cousin? Do tell me where she is and what she is going to do this year. I have wanted to know very much, but have not heard from her all summer."

"Yes," replied Jean, "Miss Maitlandt is my cousin and she was out here on Wednesday and Thursday, but was obliged to return to Framington early because she is to enter the Massachusetts General Hospital the first of October to begin a three-years' training course. She was abroad all summer and only returned last week, so she has a great deal to do in a short time."

"Oh, I am so sorry not to have seen her, for I always enjoyed her so much. What does she mean by burying herself in a hospital? She's altogether too brilliant for that." Just then some one came up to ask Miss Hooper a question and as she excused herself Jean passed on, muttering to herself, "Horrid old thing! I suppose she wants to impress upon me how brilliant my cousin was here. Wait till she misses me in mathematics on Monday and perhaps she'll realize she can't make her cutting, sarcastic remarks to every freshman in college."

The days were full and happy ones, and Monday night arrived with the annual freshman reception. After supper Marjorie Remington went upstairs with Jean and offered to help her dress. "What shall I wear, Marjorie?" said Jean.

"All your dresses are such perfect dreams I don't know which one I like the best. But let me have another look at them. Dangerous business, though, letting me see them, for I may be tempted to borrow some of them one of these days. Now, after all, I think this

figured chiffon is the best for to-night, it's so different from anything I have ever seen. I'm crazy to see you in it."

It did not take long for Jean to do her hair and get into the chiffon dress. It was a peculiar chiffon, a light pink background shot with black and pink roses made up over a soft pink silk lining. The dress was low and showed off to advantage Jean's firm white throat and neck, and the sleeves came just above her elbows. The skirt reached only to her ankles and her stockings and slippers were of a delicate pink. Around her neck on a narrow band of black velvet was a small diamond star which sparkled with wonderful brilliancy. "There, will I do?" and she danced over gayly to Marjorie, who lay on the couch as though exhausted after her labors.

"Do? Why you are the most wonderful creature I've ever seen! You'll take everybody by storm. Wait till Jack sees you. I'm going to make him invite us out to his frat's first dance. You see, Jack's at Harvard and knows all the big men in his class. I have the

best times in the world whenever I can get out there for anything. The only trouble is it's such awful hard work getting off the hill for the night. One of my aunts lives in Newton and she's perfectly willing to chaperon me or let me stay at her house all night, but she travels so much of the time that she's always away when I want her most. I hate taking one of the faculty with me, for they're such awful sticks. I don't see any need of chaperons anyway, but they'd make an awful fuss out here if a girl went anywhere without them."

Just then the door opened and a cheery voice began, "Have you started dressing yet?" but when the eyes of the speaker fell on the vision of loveliness before her she stopped short and just gazed.

Miss Remington arose, saying, "I guess it's time for me to go, I'm not needed any longer. Hope you'll have a good time, Miss Cabot," and she brushed by Elizabeth and banged the door after her.

"Oh, Jean, have I interrupted you? I

didn't mean to. Miss Remington seems to have taken a violent dislike to me. What have I done to her?"

"Nothing, Elizabeth; she doesn't mean anything, but she's rather brusque at times, I guess."

"How beautiful you look, Jean, but I can't go with you. I haven't anything except my graduation dress and you'll be ashamed of me in that."

"Nonsense, child; let me help you dress. You'll be too sweet for words in that dainty white muslin I saw hanging in your closet. Let me do your hair low and tuck this rose at one side; it will bring out the color in your cheeks. And I've a coral pink sash I'm going to drape around your waist and with those coral pink beads father gave me just before I started you'll be a symphony in white and pink."

Indeed she did look sweet in her simple white gown and excitement made her big eyes sparkle more than was their wont. "Do you know, Jean, I've never been to a real big reception like this before. I can't dance, but I

shall enjoy just sitting and watching the others. Sometime I hope to learn if I ever have the time. It's only eight now, we have half an hour before the girls will come for us. Let's read over some German. I haven't quite finished the assignment."

"Not to-night, Elizabeth. I'm not in the mood for studying. Perhaps I'll get up early in the morning and read over a little with you. I made a good recitation to-day and that ought to do for a while. I'm going over in Marjorie's room; you can call me when the girls arrive." Elizabeth sat down at her desk to study alone, a little disappointed in Jean, for she knew she had been playing tennis all the afternoon and had made no preparation for the next day. After she had read about three pages a maid announced the arrival of their escorts, so she called Jean and the two girls hastened down the stairs.

It did not take long to reach the Gymnasium, which was ablaze with lights. As they entered the main hall they paused to survey the scene of beauty before them. The massive building was transformed into a vast autumn

out-of-doors, for golden rod and purple asters and bright-colored leaves were everywhere. The orchestra was concealed at one end of the hall, and played softly as the seniors introduced their guests to each other and to the faculty.

Jean and Elizabeth were given dance-orders, but Elizabeth timidly said, "I don't dance, Miss Farnsworth."

"That doesn't make a particle of difference, dear; lots of the girls don't, and perhaps you'd like to keep the dance-order as a souvenir for your memorabilia, for of course you will have one; all freshmen do. You will have partners just the same for all the dances and get acquainted just as quickly as though you were on the floor dancing. You must learn to dance as soon as possible, though, for it means so many good times here. Now let us meet the faculty."

Jean felt a little dismayed at the thought of meeting Miss Hooper, but she soon found herself shaking hands with her and heard her say, "Later in the evening, Miss Cabot, I hope I may have the pleasure of eating an ice with

you in the faculty alcove. Can you spare me a few moments?"

Jean answered that she would be very pleased to, although she felt she was in for an explanation of her non-appearance in the mathematics class, and dreaded it.

Every member of the faculty seemed to be particularly interested in every freshman who was introduced to her and had something pleasant to say to them all. They seemed to have entirely forgotten their mannerisms and the severity of the class rooms. Jean looked long and earnestly at Miss Emerson and wished she might stand and talk to her indefinitely, but the long line of waiting freshmen pushed her quickly along, and she determined to find time later in the evening to ask her a few questions.

Before long the dancing began and Jean found herself passed on from one girl to another; some who danced well and some who did not; some who did nothing but ask questions; some who persisted in telling their whole family history in five minutes; some tall, some short, some handsome, some homely, but all

college girls filled with the spirit of good fellowship. Once or twice she rushed over to where Elizabeth was sitting with whom she had deposited her gloves, fan, handkerchief and dance-order, and usually found her silently listening to the pearls of wisdom which fell from the lips of the senior sitting beside her.

About half-past ten Elizabeth said to her, "Jean, I have just been talking with Miss Hooper and she wishes to know if you will look for her in the faculty alcove after the next dance."

Jean was tempted to ignore the invitation and all through the next two-step turned the matter over and over in her mind and was so absorbed that her partner wondered what the other girls had found so attractive in this good-looking freshman who apparently could not talk. However, when the music stopped Jean said very casually, "Will you please tell me where the faculty alcove is?" and on being shown she very slowly approached the corner. The dim lights revealed Miss Hooper among a pile of cushions. She wondered how she could ever talk to her and what she should

THE FRESHMAN RECEPTION 73

say. When Miss Hooper perceived her she called out, "Oh, Miss Cabot, come right in. I have been waiting for you and hoping Miss Fairfax would not forget to deliver my message. Make yourself comfortable here while we enjoy these delicious ices. First, I want to talk to you about your charming cousin. We were interrupted the other day before you had told me half I wanted to know."

Just then every light in the Gymnasium went out and left the place in total darkness and a strong chorus burst into song.

"Oh, you green freshmen, green freshmen, green freshmen;

Oh, you green freshmen, come list to our song.

We're going to haze you, to haze you, to haze you;

We're going to haze you before very long."

Over and over again they sang the lines, louder and louder each time. Red-fire burned outside the building and groups of girls with their hands joined danced wildly around the red lights.

"It's the sophomores," said Miss Hooper; "every year they try to break up the freshman reception. It has become a tradition, but

one I believe should be abolished," and she slipped out into the main hall. The seniors found it was impossible to turn on the electricity, but hurried here and there and borrowed enough lanterns from obliging janitors to light the Gymnasium dimly. The music continued and the girls danced as though nothing had happened and thought it all the more fun to disappoint the sophs, who imagined the dance would be given up when the lights gave out. Partners had claimed Jean, and the dreaded interview with Miss Hooper ended almost where it had begun. At length the dancing stopped and after the good nights had been said Jean and Elizabeth and the two seniors wended their way homeward.

"What a mean thing it was to break up your reception," said Elizabeth to Miss Farnsworth.

"Oh, it wasn't wholly unexpected," she replied; "there is always great rivalry between the two lower classes and one never can tell when it will break out. You'll find this is only the beginning. Be on the watch, but take everything that's done in good spirit, for you

must remember you'll be sophs next year and can pay it all back on the next entering class."

Soon they reached Merton Hall and found other freshmen saying good night to their escorts. Soon the great outer door was closed and the weary freshmen started upstairs. When Elizabeth and Jean reached 45 they found the door locked and on it a piece of paper which they tore down and carried over to the hall light to read. These words met their astonished gaze:

"Oh, you green freshmen, green freshmen, green freshmen,

Oh, you green freshmen, pray don't try your door.

We'll give you a mattress, a mattress, a mattress,

We'll give you a mattress, to sleep on the floor.

"Well, I must say I think this is carrying things altogether too far," said Jean indignantly. "Who ever heard of sleeping on the hall floor?"

By this time the other freshmen had joined them, reporting similar experiences at their rooms. One girl came down from the fifth floor, whispering, "Isn't this the limit! In front of my door is a double mattress spread

on the floor with a blanket or two over it. Come upstairs, all of you and let's make ourselves as comfortable as we can and to-morrow we'll begin to plan our revenge on the sophs."

Jean was the most reluctant to go, and as she followed the others down the hall she cast one look over at 47 and said, "And to think she pretended to be my friend!" Then an idea seemed to come to her and she said, "Wait a minute girls; of course some of the seniors are up, so we can put our good clothes in their rooms and borrow some kimonas. But even if they want us to sleep in their rooms let's not accept their invitations. Let's drag that mattress down from fifth and put in front of some soph's room, say Marjorie Remington's, as close as possible to the door and give her a big surprise when she tries to walk out to-morrow morning."

The girls laughed at the thought of the joke and hurried to the rooms of the seniors to tell them what the sophs had done and to ask them for help in carrying out Jean's

bright suggestions. Before long they had carried down everything the sophs had left them on fifth floor to 47 and worked so carefully that no one heard them. Then the seven girls lay down on the mattress very near together to be sure, and were soon asleep forgetting the cares of their little world.

CHAPTER V

INITIATION

IT did not take very long for Jean and Elizabeth to find out a great deal about the secret societies at Ashton, much to the satisfaction of one and the keen disappointment of the other. There were five in all, the Beta Mu, the Kappa Alpha, the Sigma Delta, the Phi Beta, and the Gamma Chi. Each had from twenty to twenty-five members, chosen from the four classes; each had its club room and its society pin, which was always in evidence on the left side of the girls' waists. The first days of college the society was in the background as college came first and then class, but as matters became adjusted and the girls settled down to the routine of regular life, this factor came into evidence.

It was pretty generally conceded that the two most desirable societies were the

Gamma Chi and the Sigma Delta, and both were eager to obtain Jean Cabot as one of their members. However, the membership of the two was entirely different; to the former belonged Peggy Allison, Natalie Lawton, Dorothy Wright and Frances Farnsworth, girls with a serious purpose in college but still finding time for plenty of fun; to the latter belonged Midge Remington, Lill Spalding, Lena Jameson and Gerry Fairbanks, girls with plenty of money and clothes and a desire for athletic honors and good times foremost, with scholastic efforts in the background.

Rushing had begun early, and although at first Jean had not realized why so many girls had been so kind to her, it flashed over her all of a sudden that it had all been with the purpose of finally winning her to their particular society. Nothing definite had been said, and she had not been invited to join one or the other but she felt that it was only a matter of time. She had been to walk, to drive, to the theater, to lunch, rowing on the lake; had played tennis with the best players college afforded, had been to "hoodangs,"

first in one girl's room and then in another's, to tea at the Inn, home for week-ends with the girls who lived near by — one pleasant thing after another until she began to tire of so much attention and decided to accept no more invitations until she had had a breathing spell. One thing had troubled her at first, but she soon became used to the fact that Elizabeth had not been invited to many of the good times and often watched her depart with a look upon her face which seemed to say, "Why does she have everything and I nothing?"

One Saturday towards the end of October both girls had been invited down to Peggy Allison's room to a Gamma Chi "hoodang" or rushing-party. It was one of the few invitations in which Elizabeth was included and she had counted on it for many days. At noon she said to Jean, "What time shall we go to Miss Allison's room to-night?"

"Oh, I'm sorry Elizabeth, but you'll have to go with one of the other girls for I've promised to walk with Marjorie and Lill Spalding to Tramp's Rock this afternoon and

have tea at the Inn on our return. I'll be back about eight or thereabouts and go directly to Peggy's room so I'll see you there surely. What are you going to do this afternoon?"

"I don't know now, I had hoped that you and I could do something; we haven't had a single Saturday afternoon together yet. Isn't the college library open Saturday afternoons and evenings? Perhaps I'll go over and read a little while the last part of the afternoon."

Jean and her friends enjoyed every minute of the afternoon and just before they were ready to start back home Marjorie said to Lill, "I'm going to take Jean round the other side of the Rock for a few moments; you can sit and gaze at the clouds until we come back again if you want to."

After they had walked a few moments Marjorie said, "Jean, I've been appointed a committee of one to invite you to become a member of Sigma Delta society. We have some of the best girls in college among our members as you have had an opportunity to

see for yourself. You know what our girls have done in athletics and in social activities and we want you to be one of us. Here is a bow of blue ribbon and if you decide to become a member of Sigma Delt you will wear this ribbon Monday to chapel and to all your recitations during the day. Then all the other girls will see what you have chosen and from then on you will be ours and they will let you alone. I'm pretty sure you've made up your mind already, but I can't ask you to commit yourself until Monday. Now we'll go back for Lill and then start for the Inn."

It was considerably after eight when Jean knocked upon Peggy Allison's door and at the pleasant "Come in" entered the room and found herself the last arrival, for some twenty upper-class girls with ten or twelve freshmen were packed closely in the room and the one adjoining which had been loaned by an accommodating sophomore.

"Why, where's your room-mate, Miss Cabot?" sang out one of the girls.

"Oh, isn't she here? She said she was coming, but I haven't seen her since dinner for I was away all the afternoon and had supper at the Inn. Didn't she wait on table? I'll run upstairs and see if she's forgotten to come. That hardly seems possible, though, for she has been counting on this so long."

When Jean returned she reported that Elizabeth was nowhere to be seen, although her hat and coat were on the couch where they had evidently been thrown in haste and her white party dress still hung in the closet in its accustomed place. "I'm going downstairs to ask Mrs. Thompson if she knows whether Elizabeth was at supper, or excused for some reason." But Mrs. Thompson said that she had been at supper as usual and she knew nothing further of her whereabouts. Next, Jean hastened to the register in the reading-room and found no record of Elizabeth's leaving the dormitory. Perhaps Mary Boynton, the general proctor of Merton for student government, would have some ex-

planation for her, so she hurried to 34, but Miss Boynton knew nothing about the girl and in despair she returned to 27.

"Oh, hasn't she come yet? I've been everywhere I can think of and nobody knows anything about her. Where can she be?"

"Now, Jean, calm yourself," said Natalie, "perhaps she's visiting some of the girls in another house and has forgotten all about us. We'll wait until nine o'clock and then if she hasn't put in an appearance we'll organize a searching-party. Come, girls, pass those candies to Jean before they're all eaten up. Can't you see she's waiting for them?"

But Jean didn't seem to enjoy the candies or the other things which circulated round about her. She seemed, somehow, above the happiness of the occasion to see the disappointed look on Elizabeth's face when at noon she had told her she could not go to the party with her, and above the voices of the others she seemed to hear Elizabeth's trembling voice saying that she would spend the half-holiday in the library. It had seemed so ridiculous to Jean then to think

of spending unnecessary time in the library among dry old books. But perhaps Elizabeth had gone to the library; they could ask the librarian.

It seemed to Jean as though nine o'clock would never strike, every step in the hall must be Elizabeth's but still she did not come and at last Jean burst out, "Girls, I'm sorry to break up your little party but I can't stand it another minute. I've just got to do something. Will two or three of you come with me while I get Mary Boynton and Mrs. Thompson and with them we can go to all the dormitories and ask if she is in any of the girls' rooms? It doesn't seem probable, for she has hardly any friends outside of Merton, but I think it's the best thing to do. Each of us can take a dormitory and report at College Hall. I'll go to Wellington, Peggy can take East, Natalie, West, Miss Boynton, North, and Emily Sanderson, South. Mrs. Thompson can wait at College Hall so in case any of you girls here at Merton see Elizabeth or hear anything about her you can tell her. I'm going down now for Mrs.

Thompson; and, Natalie, will you get Mary Boynton? Don't stop to change your gowns, for we mustn't lose a minute's time. Put on your sweaters and let's start at once."

It was after ten o'clock when the little group finally met again at College Hall and the matter began to look so serious that the girls hardly knew what to do. Although they had searched the dormitories very carefully not a trace could they find of the missing girl. Finally Jean said, "Where does Miss Clarkson, the librarian, live?"

"Somewhere off the hill, Jean," answered Peggy. "We could find out from some of the faculty."

"No," said Jean, "if she isn't on the hill it won't do any good to try to find her. I wanted to ask her if she remembered seeing Elizabeth in the library to-day. I wonder how we could get into the library? What time does it close on Saturdays?"

Mary Boynton replied that Saturday evening was the only one of the week when it was open. She thought this was until half-past eight, and suggested that probably if they

could find the janitor he would let them into the building.

"But why should you think Elizabeth is in the library? Wouldn't she go out with the others when it closed?" asked Mary.

"Yes, I should think so," said Jean, "but there's nowhere else to look and if she isn't there I give up the search. I'm going to run over to Miss Emerson's a moment to ask her how we can get into the library. You people start in that direction and I'll be with you in a few moments."

Jean fairly tore over the campus and gave Miss Emerson's bell a vigorous pressing. There were no lights at the front of the house but after a little while Miss Emerson herself appeared at the door. "Why! good evening, Miss Cabot, what can I do for you so late at night? Come right into my study for it's a little chilly here. My maid has retired but I was looking over an address I am to give next week in Chicago."

"Oh, no, thank you, Miss Emerson, I can't sit down. My room-mate, Elizabeth Fairfax, is missing and we have looked everywhere for

her but can't find her. I want to look in the library before we give up the search for the last time I saw her, this noon, she told me that she might go down to the library to read. How can I get into the library to-night?"

"Now, my dear child, do calm yourself. It is rather late to disturb the janitor but I will take my keys and go with you and probably we can find the night-watchman and he will assist us. Just step into the hall while I get my coat and hat."

It seemed an interminable time to Jean before Miss Emerson returned, but at last they started out. Miss Emerson talked constantly on subjects entirely foreign to the matter of the lost girl, and Jean wondered how she could possibly think of such trivial things, much less talk about them. When they reached the little group in front of the library Miss Emerson was the only calm one among them and she quietly wished each one a good-evening and then started up the library steps. With a small electric bulb which she held in her hand she easily fitted

the key into the lock and opened the great outer doors. Then it was an easy matter to spring open the inner doors and press the electric button which flooded the foyer with brilliant light. Calling the girls to her she said, "We will take different sections of the building to explore, and if one of us discovers Miss Fairfax we will let the others know." Each girl then took an alcove and began the search. Jean went straight to the alcoves belonging to the history department. Here she called softly, "Oh, Elizabeth, are you there?" but no response came, and she went away down into the last alcove calling again and again softly, "Oh, Elizabeth, Elizabeth." At last she heard the sleepy reply, "What is it, Jean? Here I am." And Jean switched on another light and saw her room-mate lying on the floor with her head on a great book apparently as comfortable as she would have been in her own bed in Merton.

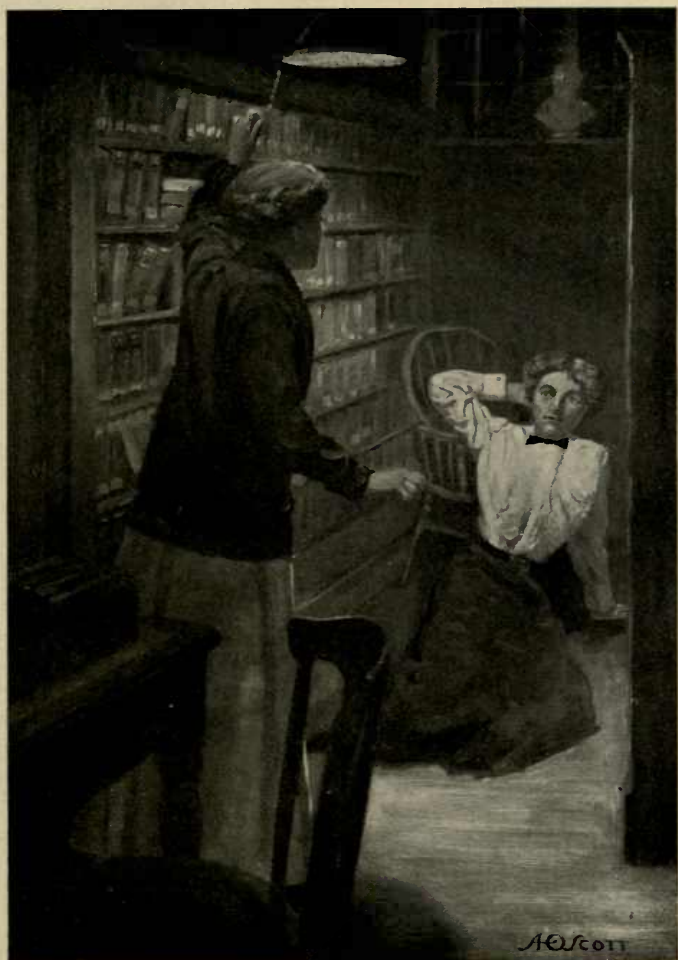
Jean went out into the main corridor and shouted, "Oh, girls — Miss Emerson — come here! I've found her." And then re-

turning to Elizabeth she said, "Why, what are you doing here? We've been looking for you all over college, and I've been nearly frightened to death about you."

When Elizabeth saw Miss Emerson and Mrs. Thompson and all the girls, she looked anxiously from one to the other and said, "Oh, I am very sorry to have caused so much trouble, I didn't think I was of enough account ever to be missed by any one, least of all by you, Jean."

"Oh, Elizabeth, how can you say that?" said Jean as she helped her to arise. "Now sit down here on this chair and tell us how you happened to be here. You didn't do it on purpose did you, Elizabeth, because I—"

But Elizabeth interrupted her with, "Oh, Jean, thank you so much for wanting to find me! It's worth all the rest. I don't see how it could have happened — unless when I get to reading history I forget everything else in the world. About four o'clock I went into the history alcove and took down a volume on Queen Elizabeth's reign and began to read. When I was about half way through



"WHY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU ALL OVER COLLEGE."—Page 90.

the third chapter, Betty Winship, who went down with me, told me it was a quarter of six. I knew I was due at Merton at six but I had reached the most interesting account of Elizabeth's education. I slipped a corner of my handkerchief into the book and put it carefully back on the shelf, deciding to go back after supper and just finish the chapter before I got ready for Peggy's party.

"I hurried back as soon as I had eaten my supper and began reading again about Elizabeth. I suppose I must have forgotten everything else in the world, for the first thing I knew every light in the building went out. I called as loud as I could but no one answered me, and for a moment I was frightened. It was so dark I could not find the electric light switches and the windows were too high even to hope to reach. I made up my mind there was nothing to do but stay here until morning when perhaps I could hail a passer-by."

"But Elizabeth, didn't you know it was Saturday night and the library wouldn't be opened again till Monday morning?" said

Jean. "Just think what might have happened if you couldn't have found some one to open the door. You'd have almost starved in there alone. I guess very few of the girls ever go by the library on Sundays. Isn't it lucky we came here to-night?"

"I didn't think about that. I forgot it was Saturday and thought of course it would open early the next morning. I was tired and as I could find nothing else for a pillow I took the book in my lap and laid my head on that. Of course floors aren't the softest beds in the world, but I must have fallen asleep, for I don't remember anything else until I heard Jean calling to me. I'm so sorry to have caused so much worry and trouble. I didn't dream any one would ever miss me," and the tears began to trickle down her cheeks.

Miss Emerson put her arm around Elizabeth and led her out into the foyer, followed by the rest of the little procession. "Miss Cabot," she said, "will you please put off the lights and after we are all out, close the door; it locks itself. Thank you very much."

Soon Elizabeth had regained her usual

good spirits and walked up the Row with Mary Boynton and Peggy Allison, followed by the others, with Jean and Miss Emerson in the rear. "Thank you so much, Miss Emerson, for coming with me and helping us to-night," said Jean, but Miss Emerson replied, "I think it is you who ought to be thanked. Without your good work Miss Fairfax would have remained all night in the library and doubtless would have caught a severe cold, to say nothing of a nervous shock. She does not look very strong, but what an interesting little room-mate she must be!"

Jean was thankful that they reached Miss Emerson's house just then in time to save her the humiliation of having to reply that as yet she really hadn't had much time to find out anything interesting about her room-mate.

It did not take long to reach Merton and disperse for the night. As they were going upstairs Peggy Allison said, "Oh, Jean, after you have taken Elizabeth upstairs would you mind coming down in my room for just a

moment?" Jean replied that she would, although she was so tired that it seemed as though she could not wait another moment to get into bed. She threw her things on the couch, stumbled over her waste-basket, groped her way down the stairs and knocked timidly at Peggy's door.

"Come in, Jean," said Peggy. "Sit down just for a moment. It's too bad our party wasn't the success we hoped it would be but I want to tell you that I think what you have done was splendid. We never would have found her if it hadn't been for you. But there's something else I want to tell you to-night. I had intended to earlier in the evening but really I couldn't find an opportunity until now. We, that is, the Gamma Chis, want you to become one of our members. Monday is pledging day and here is a bow of green ribbon; if you decide to join us you will wear this little bow pinned on the left side of your shirt-waist and that will show the other girls that you belong to us. Wear it to chapel in the morning and to recitations all day. You will not be the only girl

with a bow of colored ribbon on, for every society will have invited girls to do the same as I have you. You know our girls; you've met them all, and by this time know whether you like us or not. I've wanted you for one of our members since the first day I saw you on the train at New York, but I realize others have desired you, too. We do have good times together, and you won't make a mistake if you join Gamma Chi. I'll be watching to see you enter chapel Monday morning and I hope we win. There, I won't keep you another minute to-night. Good night, dear. Remember, whichever way you choose, it can't make a particle of difference in our friendship. We can always be good friends even if we're not sisters. Can you see your way upstairs? The lights have been out for hours."

When Jean reached her room she switched on the light and walked over to her somewhat disordered desk. She swept the books and papers off and placed the two bows of ribbon, the green and the blue, side by side on the cleared space and contemplated them for a

moment. Her reverie was interrupted by a knock at the door and she found Marjorie Remington just outside.

"Let me in for just a moment," whispered Marjorie; "put out your lights for it's late. Tell me what all this excitement's about. I didn't get back from Lill's room till almost ten and every one was talking about Elizabeth's being lost and all you people out hunting for her. Where did you find her?"

Jean related the incident as briefly as possible, and when she had finished Marjorie said, "And you did all that for that insignificant little freshman? I thought you never bothered your head about her except for German translations? You're easy, that's all I've got to say. I'm dead for sleep, so good night," and she stole quietly back to her room. As Jean went over to her desk and put on the lights again she looked at the two bows on the desk and smiled down at them without saying a word.

Monday morning Jean arose before Elizabeth and went out to the desk to do a little studying before breakfast. She had been

translating her French for about a half-hour when two telegrams were brought to her room. Frightened, she tore open the envelopes and read first,

"Is it to be cousin or sister?"

"ANNA MAITLANDT."

And then,

"I bet on the 'Wearing of the Green.'"

"THOMAS CABOT."

She smiled as she read them a second time, and then wondered how Tom and Anna had ever guessed.

Jean purposely avoided Elizabeth that morning and hurried to chapel alone. When she took her usual seat she felt as if every eye was upon her. She tried not to look conscious, but she felt that she failed in the attempt. It took only a moment to see that she wore the bow of green, and joy reigned among the Gamma Chis and sorrow among the Sigma Delts.

It was about two weeks after Pledging Monday that Jean was told to be ready on Wednesday, November twelfth, for her

initiation into Gamma Chi. At half-past eight she reported at Peggy Allison's room where she was blindfolded and wrapped in a long black cape. It seemed to her that she was led miles and miles by a guard on either side who spoke never a word. Finally they reached what appeared to be a subterranean passage which led into a cold, damp cave. Jean was commanded to fall upon her knees and raise her right hand and swear by all the sacred spirits of the past to be true forever to Gamma Chi. Then there arose a most dismal wail from the spirits of the past, and Jean in fear and trembling promised all that was asked of her.

"Will you wear for evermore the insignia of Gamma Chi?" said a sepulchral voice.

"I will," said poor Jean.

"Then stretch forth thy good right arm that we may bare it to the elbow. Here let us imprint our emblem," and Jean shuddered as the red-hot brand traced out the figures on her arm. She wondered why she did not scream out, and although she had never

fainted in her life she felt at this moment as though she were about to fall to the floor.

Just then the handkerchief was torn from her eyes, a hearty laugh came from the girls and Jean found herself in the cellar of the dormitory which the girls had borrowed for the occasion. She looked down at her bared arm and then at Peggy, who stood before her with a pointed piece of ice still in her hands.

"You're a brick, Jean. It's no fun trying to haze you; why didn't you scream or do something exciting? Well, you have been so good about this part that we'll take you up to society rooms without any more delay."

When they reached the rooms which were on the upper floor of a private residence a little distance from the college buildings they found all the girls chatting merrily and laughing over the evening's adventures. Soon, however, they proceeded to serious matters, and the five freshmen and one sophomore were initiated into the noble society of Gamma Chi. As it was then, and still is, a secret society, it would not be fitting

to divulge the mysteries which were revealed to the wondering six. Suffice it to say that in due time the serious business ended, the eating began, and such quantities of food as those thirty girls consumed! At length, however, they were satisfied and arose and forming a circle they joined hands and sang:

“ Oh, here’s to Gamma Chi, Gamma Chi;
Oh, here’s to Gamma Chi, Gamma Chi;
Oh, here’s to Gamma Chi. We’ll be loyal till we die;
Drink it down, drink it down to Gamma Chi, Chi,
Chi!

And then the president, Florence Farnsworth, took the bunch of American Beauty roses which stood in the center of the table and gave one rose to each of the new members and pinned a glittering gold star upon the left side of their waists, saying as she did so, “Just above your hearts, girls; always loyal to Gamma Chi. Now, three cheers for our six new members.” After these were given, it was all over and the girls departed to their different dormitories.

As Jean had expected, she found Elizabeth had gone to bed and to sleep, but not before

first putting Jean's kimona and slippers on the couch so that she might make herself comfortable as soon as she arrived. Jean put her beautiful rose in a long, thin vase she had recently purchased in town and then placed it on Elizabeth's desk. She wished that there might have been one more freshman initiated that evening. She saw how impossible it was just then, but it was something to work for by herself. She was just beginning to see something of the real Elizabeth of whom the other girls had not the slightest suspicion.

Just before she retired Jean went to her desk and filled out a telegram blank which she found there:

"To MISS ANNA MAITLANDT, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts:

"From now on it is to be sister and cousin.

"JEAN."

CHAPTER VI

THE HARVARD-YALE GAME

“O H, Elizabeth, it’s come, it’s come!” and Jean danced into the room and frantically waved several sheets of paper in her hands.

“What’s come?” said Elizabeth, as she looked up from her history.

“My letter from Tom, and the invitation to the Harvard-Yale game. You see, I’ve been wondering all the fall if I was to go, or whether Tom would find other fellows’ sisters more attractive and forget all about me. Don’t you know that little verse:

“All good boys love their sisters;
So good I have grown,
That I love other boys’ sisters
’Most as well as my own.”

As it is, though, I am going with Tom’s roommate and Tom is going to take Connie Hunt-

ington. You haven't met her, have you? She's a California girl, in at the Conservatory, and an awfully good friend of Tom's.

"I mean to have her out here as soon as there's something worth while to take her to. The game comes the Saturday before Thanksgiving, November 23d, and it's only five days off. Tom says I'm to meet the other three in town Saturday morning and we'll have lunch early and then start for the game; afterwards we'll have dinner at the Touraine, and go to the theater. Won't that be glorious? Oh, I'm so anxious to see Tom! I wonder if he'll think I've changed any since September. Then he encloses a letter from Aunt Sarah, telling him her plans to give us a good time on our visit with her over the Thanksgiving holidays. You know, she lives in New York City winters and has more money than she knows what to do with."

"But, Jean," said her room-mate, "you four aren't going to dinner and to the theater alone on Saturday, are you? And how are you going to get back to the hall after the theater?"

“Oh, I shall have to get permission from Mary Boynton to be away for the day, and I shall come back after the theater in Mrs. Nutter’s machine. Mrs. Nutter is an aunt of Constance Huntington’s, who lives in Boston, and has promised to chaperon the party. I’m going in to see Midge Remington a few minutes, for she’s been telling everybody for weeks that she was going to the game with Jack Goodrich, who’s a senior at Harvard. She’ll know all about everything and tell me just what to do.”

But Marjorie was not at home, or at least did not answer to the knock on her door. She had never forgiven Jean for joining Gamma Chi, and had been rather cool to her ever since although she did not openly show her hostility. Jean hurried on to Mary Boynton’s room to gain the desired permission to attend the game at Cambridge. When she entered Miss Boynton’s room, that young lady and her room-mate, Ethel Lillibridge, were having afternoon tea with Miss Hooper. Mary insisted upon Jean’s joining them and drawing another chair up to the cozy tea-

table poured out a cup of tea and passed her the heaped-up plate of sandwiches.

"How pleasant," said Miss Hooper. "I was intending to call on you, Miss Cabot, after I left here. I seldom get over to Merton, and when I do I enjoy the girls here so much that I usually spend the afternoon in one room instead of making several calls so perhaps I shouldn't have seen you after all. How are you enjoying the year? I believe I haven't seen you except at a distance since the freshman reception when the sophomores left us in the dark so uncereemoniously. Of course, like the rest of us, you are very busy all the time."

"Oh, I hope I'm not intruding upon your tea-party," said Jean. "I came to see Miss Boynton on business, but I can postpone it until another day."

"Now, Jean, wait until we have finished our tea and then if Miss Hooper will excuse us for a moment we can transact our little business in the other room and come back for some more tea."

About five o'clock, after Jean and Mary

had discussed the game and permission had been given her to attend, Jean arose to leave the room. Miss Hooper excused herself, and the two started down the corridor together.

"I think this is a splendid afternoon to walk, Miss Cabot, I wonder if you would care to stroll down to the Willows with me before supper," said Miss Hooper. "I haven't been down there since college opened, and it has always been one of my favorite walks."

Jean had planned to spend the hour before supper on her French, but she felt that she could not refuse Miss Hooper's invitation. The day had been clear and crisp and the setting sun dropped its mantle of brilliant color upon all the world. Twilight was creeping on apace as they entered the Willows, so called because of the great weeping willows which grew thickly on both sides of the road for a half mile or so below the post-office.

"When the snow is on the ground and it's moonlight, I want you to come down here with me some evening," said Miss Hooper,

"and see the beauty of the willows in winter. I haven't a particle of poetry in my soul, but if I did have I am sure I should find inspiration here. What a wonderful thing it is to have talent and give so much that is beautiful to the world! I cannot play or sing, but music has always been a passion with me. Mary Boynton told me how well you play and how much you enjoy music. I am glad that we have that taste in common. I have two tickets for the Symphony concerts in Boston this winter and I should like to take you with me the Saturday evening after our Thanksgiving holidays if you would like to go."

"Indeed I should like to go, Miss Hooper, and I thank you very much for the invitation. Music is my favorite study and I intend to devote all my time to it next year."

"What! do you mean that you are going to be a special?"

"No, Miss Hooper, I do not intend to return to Ashton another year. I shall study music in Los Angeles, and in a year or two perhaps study in Germany."

"Oh, you're not coming back to college? Are you serious about it? I hope you have not fully made up your mind to it, for we want you here."

"Yes, Miss Hooper, from the very first I have only intended staying this one year."

"Perhaps we can make you change your mind before June. I think we had better turn back now for it must be almost six o'clock. I could walk on for miles and miles here and forget time completely. Do you know where I live, Miss Cabot? It's Wellington, first floor. I have been matron there for ten years, and every year I am determined to give it up and live out of a dormitory, but still I stay on. There's something very fascinating to me in living with the girls and coming to know them so intimately. Do you spend the Thanksgiving recess away?"

"Yes, my brother, who is in Yale, and I are going to an aunt's in New York. I'm to go over Wednesday noon and stay until Sunday night. It seems as though I couldn't wait for the time to come. Do you go away?"

"No, I haven't many relatives in this part of the country, so I shall be here. Miss Emerson always invites the faculty and girls, who have no other place, to her house to eat turkey with her."

The conversation changed from one subject to another and when they parted at Merton, Jean wondered why no reference had ever been made to her dropping mathematics without an explanation to Miss Hooper. She was beginning to think she had been a little hasty in her judgment of her and she almost wished she had not given up the subject so quickly.

The days went by on leaden feet until Saturday the twenty-third. Jean awoke that morning early for excitement would not let her sleep. She looked over at Elizabeth's bed and found she was awake, too, so she quickly jumped from bed and ran to the window and raised the shade. "Oh, goody," she cried, "it's going to be a fine day! I was afraid last night it would rain, for the moon had a ring around it, and that's a sure sign of storm. I'm going to get ready for the game before break-

fast so I can go to Chapel and first recitation. I don't need to start in until 10.23 for I'm not to meet the others until eleven at the Touraine. Wasn't it lucky I chose a blue hat and suit this fall? It isn't a real Yale blue, but it is near enough to show where my sympathies are. Do you think I'd better take my fur coat? I suppose one can't tell about the weather these days, and it's better to be on the safe side."

Jean talked continually as she dressed and answered her own questions, for Elizabeth seemed unusually silent. When she finished dressing she looked to Elizabeth for approval. "What, aren't you up yet? What's the matter this morning?"

"I don't know, Jean. When I went to bed last night I had a slight headache and this morning it's so bad I can't lift my head from the pillow. I don't understand it, for I never have headaches."

"Too much studying, dear. You know you were reading very late last night. Well, you stay right in bed all the morning. I'll bring up your breakfast to you and sign off for you at the office. Where do you keep your apron?"

I'm going to do your work this morning in the dining-room."

"Why, Jean Cabot, of course you're not! The idea of your thinking of such a thing. I'll be better if I get up, and I'm sure I shall be all right when I get at work."

"No, you stay right where you are and let me do as I said. There, it's seven now; good-by for a little while; please go to sleep again," and Jean shut the door before Elizabeth could protest further.

Every girl in the dining-room was so astonished that she could hardly eat when she saw Jean Cabot with a dainty white apron over her new blue suit, waiting on the middle table at breakfast. She hurried here and there and supplied their wants as though she had done it every morning of the year instead of for the first time in her life. Questions were on everybody's lips, but her only answer was, "Oh, Elizabeth overslept and I'm helping out."

Just as she had finished her own breakfast she was called out into the hall to sign for an express package which had just arrived for

her. When she opened it she found an enormous bunch of violets with a card bearing the name, Frederick Manning Thornton. She buried her face in the heart of the bouquet and breathed deeply of the fragrance, then she held them up against her dress, exclaiming, "A perfect match, nothing could be better," and she hastened upstairs to put them in water until it was time to start.

After she had placed them in a vase she thought she would show them to Elizabeth. She knocked lightly on the door to see if she were asleep, and a cheery little "Come in" made her open the door. "See what I've brought to you," said Jean before she knew what she was saying. "Let me draw the table up to the bed and put the violets where you can see them. Now I'm going down for your breakfast."

"Why, Jean, where did these violets come from?"

"Oh, from an unknown admirer of yours who does not wish his name revealed. Now, what would you like for your breakfast?"

"Jean, I know these flowers were intended

for you to wear to the game and I shall not let you leave them here. What has possessed you this morning? You're not at all like yourself."

"It's just that I'm nearly beside myself because I'm going to see Tom, blessed Tom! I guess if you were miles and miles away from your family you'd be beside yourself at the prospect of seeing your only brother in the East. I'm going to bring him out here tomorrow, so you must get better before then."

"Truly, I'm better now, Jean, and I'm sure when you return to-night you'll find me all well again. But I shall insist upon your wearing your violets."

"No, Elizabeth, they're for you, to remind you of me when I'm gone."

"I don't need these to remind me of you, Jean; there are so many other reminders everywhere."

Mrs. Thompson insisted upon taking up Elizabeth's breakfast to her and Jean hurried to Chapel, for it was late. Just outside Merton she met Marjorie Remington and Lill Spalding on their way in town. "Why don't

you come in with us, Jean; we're going to cut all day. Come along and be a sport."

"No, I'm not going to cut any more than's absolutely necessary. I don't need to go in until the 10.23," said Jean.

"Oh, very well. Seems to me you're getting awfully conscientious all of a sudden," and as she hurried away Marjorie proceeded to tell Lill of the incident of the breakfast table.

Jean slipped into Chapel a little late and then went into the philosophy class. At length it was ended and she was on her way to Merton. She had time for a look into Elizabeth's room and found her more comfortable, although still in bed. When she reached the station it was thronged with girls going to the game, and until the train arrived they all talked excitedly about their seats and escorts. Most of the girls were to be the guests of Harvard men and of course would sit on the Harvard side, but a few, like herself, had brothers or cousins at Yale. She discovered another freshman, Jessica Goddard, attired in blue, and she ran up and greeted her with, "Good, Jess, you're Yale, I know! Come and sit with me and tell

me all about the Yale players. I know almost nothing about them and Brother will be sure to expect me to be well informed."

The twelve minutes passed rapidly and before Jean had heard half enough they were out of the train and a part of the vast throng at the North Station. They had taken only a few steps before Jean heard her name called several times and turning she saw Tom and his room-mate and Constance Huntington running up the platform back of her.

"How did you get by us, Jean?" said Tom. "We stood right by the gate and didn't see anything of you until Connie spied you walking up the platform. We were looking for a girl with a bunch of violets and you haven't any."

"Well, I'll tell you about those later on," said Jean, "but now please introduce me to your room-mate so I can thank him for sending them to me."

Introductions followed and Jean apologized for not wearing the violets. "My room-mate was ill and I left them with her," she said.

"In that case," replied young Mr. Thornton, "you certainly deserve another bunch as soon as we can locate a florist's shop."

"Why, Tom, how did you happen to be here at the station? You told me in your telegram to be at the Touraine."

"Mrs. Nutter kindly offered us her automobile for the morning, so we decided to come down here and surprise you. She is in the machine just outside the station, so perhaps we'd better hustle out there. We are going to ride around the city till lunch-time. The game's at two, so we won't have any time for sight-seeing after lunch."

After they had taken their places in the machine they were whirled away into the crowded thoroughfare. Lunch was hastily eaten and at one o'clock they were on their way to Cambridge. Thousands of automobiles raced along Massachusetts Avenue; cabs and hansom, electric cars, everything was taxed to its utmost as it sped on to the game. Mrs. Nutter tried to point out places of interest, but no one seemed to care much for anything but the game.

When they reached the Stadium they found both sides of the street lined with automobiles, so Mrs. Nutter had her chauffeur leave them at the main entrance and then take the car up the long line till space could be found to park it.

It took a long time for the little party to reach their seats, for the surging crowd ahead of them demanded attention, but each and all jostled along without a shade of impatience. Jean thought she had seen numberless girls at college, but now it seemed as if all the girls together would not have filled a single section. Where could they all have come from? At last they were seated in a section which the boys declared couldn't be better and they had a good half-hour to view the crowds and the players before the game began. Tom and his room-mate recognized fellows all around them, for almost every one in Yale had come to the game and they took great pleasure in pointing out the celebrities.

"See, there's Tad Bronson, two rows below us, captain of next year's baseball team. Isn't that girl with him a peach? They say they're

118 JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

engaged. She came all the way from Chicago for the game."

"There's Prexy down in the front row, and that man just rising is Prof. Hamilton. He flunks more men in college than all of the rest of the profs together."

"See, here comes our fellows, Tubbie Spencer in the lead. Wait till you see how he can play. What's the matter? Why don't we give them a cheer? Well, here's Billy Knowlton, cheer leader for this section; he'll start 'em up," and in a moment the most deafening noise that Jean had ever heard rose from the Yale side. Cheer followed cheer, and songs were occasionally intermingled. Jean found herself joining in as excitedly as the boys and in a little while knew all the Yale players and most of the Harvard ones.

Promptly at two o'clock the referee blew his whistle and the two elevens lined up for the first kick-off. From then until ten minutes after four there was not a dull moment. The ball was back and forth over the field, first on Harvard's ground and then on Yale's. The playing was more even than it had been for

years and at the end of the second half the score was 6-5 in favor of Harvard.

Jean was so disappointed she could hardly keep back the tears that had started to her eyes, and she cried out, "I think it's a down-right shame! To think you should be beaten at my first Harvard-Yale, Mr. Thornton! I just hate Harvard."

"Yes, it is hard luck, and my greatest regret is that I can't look forward to next year to see Yale trim them. That's the worst of being a senior; everything you do this year is for the last time. I envy you being a freshman with four good years ahead of you. They're the best years of your life, take my word for it. I'd give a good deal if I were beginning it all over again. Of course I shall always try to go to the big games, but it will never be the same as when you're an undergraduate. See the fellows down there forming the procession. They'll march up and down the Stadium several times and throw their hats up over the goals. No one ever expects to get his own hat back, but it's all part of the game. They'd better celebrate to-day,

for they may not have another chance again."

The little party stood and watched the long procession of undergraduates take possession of the great Stadium as they marched up and down, across and around the field. When they reached either goal every hat was off and tossed up over the cross-bar and caught again by the nearest man as it came down. After fifteen or twenty minutes of this the procession passed out of the gate, the leaders carrying the victorious eleven upon their backs, and soon they were lost from sight, although their shouting and singing could be heard long after.

It was almost dark when Mrs. Nutter and her guests took their places in the automobile. They had been obliged to wait a long time for the machine, as there were so many others ahead of them. However, they made up for lost time by tearing with the highest speed toward Boston. As they were crossing Harvard Bridge Jean begged them to stop a moment, for the three bridges spanning the Charles seemed to be but parallel lines of

bright lights which in the darkness presented a most novel appearance. She saw the lighted dome of the State House for the first time and exclaimed upon its height and brilliancy. "I wish I had to cross Harvard Bridge every night, it is so beautiful here," she said as they started off again.

A table had been reserved for them at the Touraine and they found themselves among a merry throng of young people, most of them the supporters of the crimson and jubilant over their victory. Here and there were Yale men and their guests and the men and girls circulated from one table to another renewing acquaintances.

It was a little late when they arrived at the theater and the play had already begun. The house had been bought up by the Yale men and decorations of blue were everywhere. The singers had touches of blue in their costumes and sang the good old Yale songs, and at the end of the second act threw hundreds of rolls of blue confetti out over the audience. No one pretended to know anything about the comic opera itself, for there was so much Yale

music introduced, so many jokes about the football players and the game, so much applause and singing on the part of those in the audience that the real plot, if there could be said to be one, was almost lost sight of.

As the boys wished to take the midnight express out of Boston, Tom suggested that they leave before the last act was quite over. The party were to see Jean safely landed at Ashton and then motor back to Boston. Jean was disappointed that Tom could not stay over Sunday, for she had promised herself the pleasure of taking him to Vespers and introducing him to her friends. He promised her that pleasure later in the year and reminded her that they were to have five days together the next week. The two talked over trains and plans for meeting in New York and the others became very quiet, for the day had been a long one in spite of its many pleasures, and they were content to make themselves as comfortable as possible in the machine and let the others do the talking.

It was after eleven when they drew up in front of Merton, and Jean and Tom alighted.

Good-nights were said and promises made for future reunions, and as Jean stepped into the hall Tom sang out, "Good-by till Wednesday. I'll meet you in the Grand Central at four. If I'm not at the train you sit down by the Inquiry Office and wait till I come. The trains are apt to be crowded at holiday time and one can't tell when they will arrive. So long; hope you'll find your room-mate better. Give her my bestest," and he hastened back to the others and they were off and away before Jean had reached 45.

Although she entered the room very quietly Elizabeth heard her and called her into the bedroom, which she entered, asking, "How do you feel, Elizabeth?"

"Oh, ever so much better, Jean. I shall be all right in the morning. My headache has gone entirely. I got up this afternoon, but didn't go out of the room. So many of the girls were away that I wasn't really needed in the dining-room. Was everything as nice as you expected?"

"Yes, Elizabeth, I think it has been the happiest day this year so far. There's so

much to tell you it can be our main topic of conversation for the rest of the term. However, I'm not going to begin until to-morrow, for I'm so tired I can't see straight. I'll just put out the lights in the other room and then I'm ready for bed."

"Oh, Jean, I forgot to tell you that there are two notes for you on your desk. Some one brought them this afternoon and I left them where you could find them as soon as you came in."

"Thank you," said Jean, and she dragged her weary feet out into the other room. She went straight to her desk and turned on the little desk light, which revealed two envelopes bearing the college seal. "They look suspicious," she said to herself. "Faculty notes; I recognize the writing on one of them. Well, I won't open them to-night. I've had a perfect day and these would spoil it all. I'll wait till morning before I read them," and she left them exactly where Elizabeth had placed them, and putting out the lights was soon in bed.

She awoke very early next morning, almost before it was light, for in spite of her weariness

ness she could not seem to sleep. Something had disturbed her usual placid slumber, but she could not just remember what it was. Then it came over her that something unpleasant waited for her on her desk. She crept softly into the other room and sat down at the desk and slowly opened the notes. The first one was from Mlle. Franchant; a warning in French with the suggestion that the subject be dropped at Christmas if there was not a decided improvement. The second was from the Office informing her that she had overcut in Chapel and also in gymnasium classes and asking her to report at the Dean's Office Monday at half-past eleven o'clock. How long she stared at the messages before her she did not know, but when she could no longer see them for the blinding tears she dropped her head on her arms upon the desk and sobbed, "I do care, I do care!" And when some time after Elizabeth came out into the room she found her still there. She did not try to comfort her, but left her to fight it out with herself.

CHAPTER VII

THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS

JEAN was on her knees bending over her steamer trunk. On either side of her were huge piles of clothes and she was having great difficulty in choosing what to take with her. It was Tuesday just after supper, and Jean had decided to devote the evening to her packing, for she was to start at noon the next day. Marjorie Remington had offered to help her pack and although Jean felt that she had done it more to see her clothes and hear what she was going to do in New York than to render her any real assistance she had not declined her offer. She did not wish to incur Marjorie's ill-will any more than was necessary, for already several little things had been said and done which hurt Jean more than she was willing to admit. And not only against Jean had Marjorie made her unkind remarks but against Elizabeth as well, and

Jean felt that Marjorie availed herself of every opportunity to prejudice her against her roommate.

Marjorie had been exceedingly careless of her own behavior of late, and after the Harvard-Yale game had stayed in town all night at her aunt's without first gaining permission to do so. She was severely reprimanded for this and warned that a second offense would not be tolerated. And, although no one knew it, she had received two faculty warnings, but had made up her mind to ignore them.

A little after eight o'clock she hurried into Jean's room exclaiming, "Sorry, Jean, but I can't help you pack after all, Jack's just come out to call. I hadn't the least idea he would come to-night, but he's such an uncertain quantity I never can tell what he's going to do next. However, he's so good-looking and such a dear I can forgive him for 'most everything. Hope you'll have a gay time in the big city. Wish I were going over, too, but I've decided to go to my aunt's. You see, Jack isn't going home, either, for he only has the day and he's promised to give me one good

time if I'll stay in Boston. Here comes that pious room-mate of yours. Positively, she gets on my nerves more every day. I don't believe she's half as innocent as she pretends to be, either, and I wouldn't trust all my perfectly good things to her the way you do. Good-by," and as she left the room Elizabeth entered.

"Oh, Jean, please let me help you with your packing. When do you ever expect to wear all these clothes? There's enough for a month instead of a few days. I've never seen half of these before."

"No, some of them haven't been out of my trunk before. I've been saving them for this visit, as I expect to be on the go every minute I'm away and I'll need plenty of good-looking things. Would you take this chiffon, or does it look too soiled?"

Before Elizabeth could answer there came a knock at the door and a telegram was handed to Jean. When she opened it she could hardly believe her eyes. It was from Tom and said:

"Visit postponed. Aunt Sarah very sick. Stay at college.

"Tom."

She did not say a word, but passed the telegram over to Elizabeth to read and then sank helplessly down on the floor beside her trunk. When astonishment had given place to anger, she burst out, "Did you ever hear of anything like that? Why did Aunt Sarah take Thanksgiving of all times in the year to be sick? To think I've been waiting all this time to go on and visit her and see Tom and have the time of my life and then have to give it all up and stay here with the rest of lonely freshmen! Pleasant prospect, isn't it?"

"Oh, Jean, I'm very sorry it's happened. Of course it's a disappointment. But there will be a lot of the other girls here, and you're all invited down to Miss Emerson's for dinner. It won't be like New York with your own people, but I'm sure she will do everything she can to make the day a pleasant one for you. I almost hate to ask you, but would you rather go home with me to Newburgh than stay here

at college? I haven't very much to offer you in the way of good times, but I should love to have you see my home and know my people if you won't mind putting up with all our inconveniences. I can show you real old New England country life in the winter, for they have snow there already, and it's been good skating, too. There are hardly any young people, and what there are will not be at all like those you have always known. You won't need any of those fine clothes you had planned to take to New York, but you can put a few waists and a thick dress and sweater into your suit-case and come along without any more preparations. It's very cold up there, so you want to take plenty of warm clothes. I have planned to start from the North Station at four o'clock, but we won't reach home until late in the evening, as we have to drive a good seven miles. There is no station at Newburgh, but we leave the train at Wilton Junction and probably Brother will meet us there to drive us home in the sleigh. Don't decide to-night, Jean; think it over and tell me in the morning. I think I'll go to bed

early to-night. How good it seems not to have any lessons to prepare! Before I go, can I help you put away your clothes?"

"Yes, if you will, Elizabeth, and I sha'n't wait until to-morrow to accept your invitation. I am terribly disappointed not to go to my aunt's, but I think it will be splendid to go home with you. I've never been sleighing or skating in my life, and all I know about it is what I've read in books. Thank you so much for wanting me to go with you. Will you put this box in on my dresser if you're going into the bedroom?"

The two girls worked rapidly together, and soon had cleared away the piles of clothes Jean had deposited upon the floor. They felt so in the mood for cleaning that they dusted and put to rights both rooms so that they might look presentable during their absence. As Jean was dusting her dresser she opened the box which she had asked Elizabeth to place there and after examining its contents carefully she said, "Elizabeth, have you seen anything of my coral beads? They aren't here with my other things, and I'm sure I had them

in the box. I wore them this afternoon to Bertha Merrill's tea and I thought I put them in here when I changed my dress. Perhaps they're mixed up with some of the things we put in the trunk. I think I'll look around a little to-night, for they must be somewhere in the room."

Both girls searched everywhere they knew of, but they could find no trace of the beads. "It's the strangest thing I ever heard of," said Jean. "We can't do much until after vacation, for every one will go away to-morrow. I'll put a notice on our bulletin board and report the loss to — who's the proctor on our floor this week?"

"Grace Hooper," said Elizabeth.

"Well, I'll run down to her room a minute and tell her about it and then I'll be ready to turn in."

When she returned she told Elizabeth that Grace Hooper and Mary Boynton thought it best to say or do nothing about the loss of the beads until college began again Monday morning. Perhaps by that time the beads would

have been found and they would be saved the unpleasant duty of investigation.

When the two girls stepped into the train at the North Station the next day they found it crowded to the utmost with happy travelers returning home for the holidays. There did not seem to be any seats together, so they stood their suit-cases at one end of the car and perched upon them to wait until some of the passengers should alight at the first station. Several of the college girls they knew were homeward bound on the same train and joined them, using their bulging cases as seats. It began to snow lightly soon after the train started, and as they went farther north they found evidences of recent snow storms, and when they reached Wilton Junction they found it piled up in great drifts round the station.

As they alighted from the train they looked in vain for "Brother Dick" or Dr. Fairfax. "Don't be alarmed, Jean, I never know when any one will meet me. You see, doctors are likely to be called out any time miles and miles, and when you've got only one horse on

the place you get used to waiting. Let's go into the station and keep warm, and for excitement we can get weighed or read the timetables on the wall."

Huddled round a great old-fashioned stove in the center of the room were a dozen or so people waiting for belated trains. They forgot the cold or disappointment at missing their train when they saw the two girls. It was not often they had such a good-looking stranger as Jean Cabot to gaze upon. She did make a picture there in her dingy surroundings with her long fur coat and little fur turban with two iridescent quills stuck jauntily through the front. The blackness of the fur as it rested against her hair intensified its golden hue and the fair whiteness of her skin.

From one corner where he apparently had been dozing arose a long-legged, lackadaisical-looking fellow, who strolled up to where the two girls were standing.

"Why, how d'ye do, Miss Fairfax. Home for the holidays?" was his greeting, and all the time he was stealing glances at Jean. Elizabeth coolly replied to his question and intro-

duced him to Jean. He hardly had time for more than a few casual remarks before Elizabeth heard some sleigh-bells and going to the door saw her father outside in his little low sleigh. "May I call on you before you return to college?" asked the young man as he carried their heavy suit-cases to the waiting sleigh.

"Why, yes, if you care to," replied Elizabeth as she and Jean stepped up to the sleigh.

"Father, I've brought my room-mate, Jean Cabot, home with me for the holidays. She expected to go to New York to visit her aunt, but at the last moment she had to give it up, as her aunt was sick. I know you are always glad to welcome one more, so I invited her up here."

"Very glad to know you, Jean. Hope you'll excuse my not getting out to help you," said Dr. Fairfax, "but I'm so bundled up I don't believe I could ever get back again if I once got out. It's been a terribly cold day up our way, and I drove ten miles the other side of our hill before I came down for you. I've been over to Judge Morton's, Elizabeth, to see

his mother. She's a pretty sick woman, and I almost doubt if I can pull her through this time."

"Oh, that accounts for Franklin Morton's being at Wilton Junction. What a contemptible snob that fellow is! I've seen him hundreds of times driving through the village, and have known him ever since he first spent his summers at Gorham, but he's never spoken five words to me until to-night when he saw the prospect of meeting Jean. Did you hear him ask if he might call on us? I imagine him in our little farmhouse! Well, I guess we needn't borrow trouble, for he would never come, especially as his grandmother is very sick.

"Now, Father, what about Dick? I hoped he would come down with you to the station."

"Lucky he didn't now, isn't it, Jean, for how could we four have ridden home in this little sleigh? Pretty tight squeeze as it is. To tell you the truth, dear, I'm a little worried about Richard's case, for he doesn't seem to get his strength back as I wish he would.

Typhoid does pull any one down so, it's a hard fight to get back again. He's been a wonderfully patient boy through it all, but I think sometimes he gets discouraged about himself, although he never says anything to us. I don't know what he would do without your letters, girl. I verily believe he knows them all by heart, and he talks about your friends there as though they were his own. He'll feel right at home with this young lady here, for next to you, Elizabeth, Jean has been of most interest to him, and he's wondered so many times if he could ever see her.

"Here, Jean, is where we begin to climb our hill at the top of which is our little village. I think now that it has stopped snowing the moon will soon appear, and if it does you will see one of the finest winter pictures I know of. I ride for miles and miles around this whole country, but I know of no more beautiful views than this hill affords us in winter as well as in summer.

"See, there's the moon peeping behind that cloud now."

Slowly the old horse pulled his heavy load

up the long hill, and before the ascent was half made the full moon was shining brightly, shedding its beauty over the snow-covered country. Gaunt trees threw long black shadows across the tiny thread of a road, while here and there were deserted buildings almost hidden from view by the great drifts of snow. There was hardly a sound but the tinkle of their own sleigh-bells and the crunching of the runners on the snow. Peace and quiet and beauty were everywhere, as far as the eye could reach.

Jean could hardly believe her eyes. Here was something she had read about but never seen, and the wonder of it threw its spell over her. Indeed, all three became gradually silent, apparently engrossed with their own thoughts, the doctor wondering how his aged patient was rallying under the treatment he had suggested, Elizabeth, deeply troubled by her father's words about her brother, and Jean lost in contemplation of the strange and wonderful scene before her.

Jean was the first to break the silence. "Oh, Elizabeth, how I wish Miss Hooper were

riding with us to-night! About two weeks ago when I was walking with her through the Willows she said she wanted me to go there with her again when there was snow on the ground and a moon, for it is so beautiful. But I am sure nothing could be as wonderful as this hill to-night. I wish I could give her a good description of its beauty."

"Why don't you write to her while you are here and tell her about it? I know she would appreciate it, for she told me she was to stay at Ashton over the holidays."

"I think I will write to her to-night and tell her all about this wonderful ride. It seems now as if I could ride on forever, but I see lights over there, so we must be approaching the village. Why, it seems as though we were on top of the world up here!"

"We'll be home in half an hour, Jean; our house is right over there," and Elizabeth pointed to a little group of lighted houses at her right.

It did not take long to reach the rambling old farmhouse where Fairfaxes had lived for the last hundred and fifty years. The front

door was opened as the sleigh turned into the yard and a fresh young voice rang out:

"Welcome home, Sister! Hurry up and come in, for I am tired of waiting for you. I thought you'd never get here."

The doctor warned the owner of the voice not to stand longer in the cold, and so he disappeared from view. It did not take the girls long to get into the house and reach the blazing fire in the huge fireplace. Mrs. Fairfax greeted them cordially and then brother and sister were in each others' arms. Then in a moment Elizabeth introduced Jean, and after one look at her Richard burst out, "You're just as I thought you'd be. Wishes do come true. All the afternoon I've been wishing you'd come up here on our hilltop with Sister to visit us instead of going to New York to visit your aunt. Now take off your things and let's have supper."

When the doctor came into the living-room it was the signal to repair to the dining-room, where a steaming supper awaited them. Jean thought she had never tasted anything as good in all her life, and as the cold ride had whetted

her ordinarily good appetite she did justice to everything Mrs. Fairfax had prepared. As often as she dared she stole glances at Richard Fairfax and she thought she had never before seen such an attractive although pathetic face. It was deathly white, with almost perfect features, but one could never forget the eyes. They were deep-set and dark and brilliant, but when he spoke or was interested when some one else was speaking they fairly seemed to flash fire.

The conversation at table was general, and when they arose Dick suggested that they sit round the fireplace in the living-room and he would draw the couch up and lie upon it, for he was much more comfortable there than in the hard, stiff-backed chairs. Mrs. Fairfax and Elizabeth went into the kitchen to wash the dishes and make the last preparations for the morrow's dinner, while Jean and Richard and Dr. Fairfax made themselves comfortable before the blazing wood fire.

"Let's not have a light at first, Father," said Richard; "I love the firelight best and I think Jean will, too, after she sees how nice

it is. Now, Father, will you please recite us your poem about the firelight?"

In his pleasing, deep-toned voice Dr. Fairfax gave the simple two-versed poem he had written on the firelight, and when he finished Dick pleaded, "Oh, don't stop, Father, please give us all my favorites, it's just the night for poetry." And one poem followed another until the doctor insisted that it was some one else's turn.

"Now, Jean," said Richard, "won't you give us something you have learned at college?"

"Oh, I can't. I don't know any poems. I've never learned them."

"What, never learned poetry? Don't you love it? Why, I think there's nothing in all the world to compare with it. I spend hours and hours reading my favorite poets until I know their best poems by heart. I wish I could write myself. I mean to some day if—" but his voice broke and Dr. Fairfax said, "Perhaps, Jean, before you go, Richard will let you read some of his own poems. He's

a little particular who hears them, but possibly you can persuade him to let you read them. I've got to go out to the barn now to lock up for the night, so I'll leave you here together a little while. I fear it's been a hard day for Jean and Elizabeth, so we mustn't keep them up too late. But doesn't it seem good, Dickie-boy, to have them here? It's really living again."

Left to themselves the two talked together, mostly about Jean's life in California. Just as she was in the midst of a description of a camping trip in the mountains Elizabeth hurried into the room. "What are you two talking about so excitedly? Don't you want the lamp lighted now and some more wood put on the fire? It's almost out. I came in to ask Jean if she would like to go out into the kitchen to see the turkeys and the other preparations, but you're having such a good time I hate to disturb you."

"Oh, I can finish this another time, Elizabeth; I'd like to go with you."

When Jean saw the size of the turkeys and

the quantities of other things piled up on the tables she exclaimed, "Why such an amount of food? We'll never eat that in a week."

"Wait till you see all there are to eat it and you won't think this is too much. I'll wager there won't be anything worth eating left over by Friday. I think I'm about ready for bed, Jean. How about you?"

"Quite ready, thank you. Is it late? I've lost all track of time."

"Yes, it's nearly twelve o'clock. It will be very cold up in our room, although I've lighted a fire in the stove, so I think we'd better take up these freestones to keep our feet warm. Let's go in and say good-night to father and Dick."

When the lights were out and Jean was thinking over the events of the day she could not but admit to herself that she had come into the midst of a family life wholly unknown to her before. She recognized a depth and earnestness that were lacking in most of the families with whom she was acquainted. Although she saw evidences of the lack of this world's goods, there was a certain refinement

and culture and an appreciation of the things that make life worth while. She began to realize a little the absence of purpose in her own life, and she saw for the first time what she might do with all that was hers to use.

Thanksgiving morning was not as cold as the preceding ones and gave promise of a pleasant day. The family arose early in spite of the late hour of their retiring, and at breakfast Dr. Fairfax suggested that they all attend the Thanksgiving service in the Congregational Church. "By the way, Elizabeth," he said, "Mrs. Walton wants to know if you will play the organ to-day. She hurt her wrist yesterday and won't be able to play for several weeks. She would like to have you sing a solo, too, if you can get some one to play for you."

Elizabeth blushed a little and Jean said, "Why, Elizabeth, I never knew you could play and sing. Why haven't you said something about it at college?"

"There were always so many others who did things better than I that I didn't think any one wanted me. I only play and sing a little,

but it helps out here where there are so few to do anything. Will you play my accompaniment if I sing this morning?"

"I have never played on an organ in my life, Elizabeth."

"But there is a piano, too, which we use in the Sunday school, and you can play that."

"Why, yes, if you'd like to have me, but we'd better practise together before the service begins."

"Yes, let's go into the other room now and run over one or two selections."

At ten o'clock the five took their places in the big double-seated sleigh and started for the church, a half-mile down the road. Many a sleigh heavily loaded with old and young passed them, and it did not take long for some one to discover Elizabeth and welcome her home. "Why," said Jean, "you know everybody, Elizabeth."

"Yes, it isn't hard in a little town like this, especially when one's father is the only doctor. I've driven with him ever since I can remember."

They stopped before a severe white church

on slightly elevated ground. Dr. Fairfax helped the others to alight and then drove the horse around to the sheds in back of the church.

Elizabeth and Jean went immediately to the choir loft, where they were welcomed by the few singers that had already arrived. It seemed to Jean as though most of them were Elizabeth's cousins, of one degree or another, and she began to believe that everybody in town was related to everybody else. When the congregation began to take their places, Jean took a seat in the audience near the upright piano, which occupied most of the space to the right of the pulpit.

The church was old and severe in every line, evidently built in the early days when worship did not demand comfortable surroundings. The pews were high and narrow, with faded red cushions and stools. By a quarter of eleven every pew was filled and the old white-haired preacher began the service. Jean watched Elizabeth at the organ and marveled at the melody she seemed to be getting out of the wheezy old instrument, which was pumped

intermittently by a rosy-cheeked youngster whose mind may have been more on the feast awaiting him at home than on the hymns of praise. When it came Elizabeth's turn to sing, she left the organ and stood in the center of the choir-loft and waited for Jean to strike the opening chords on the piano. Although Jean was a skilled performer on the piano it must be confessed that she trembled a little as she began to play, but when Elizabeth's sweet voice broke into song it gave her confidence, and it seemed the most natural thing in the world for Elizabeth to be singing and she to be playing in the little village church at Newburgh.

She never remembered much that the old preacher said in his eloquent sermon, for during it all she seemed to be in somewhat of a haze, but afterward she summed it up in three thoughts: the blessedness of home; the joy of the home-coming; and the satisfaction of the parents in knowing that their children have found life worth while and are making something out of it.

There was a general handshaking after the

benediction, and before she left Jean thought she knew every person in the church. It did not take her long to see how interested every one was in Elizabeth, and how glad they were to have her with them again. She had a pleasant greeting for them all, and never forgot to ask about the ones left at home.

As they drew up into the Fairfax yard again they found sleighs, single and double, already there and more following them.

"You see, Jean, it's our turn this year to have the relatives at our house," said Dr. Fairfax. "Ours is a pretty big family, and we're counting on twenty or thereabouts to-day. Everybody helps and 'many hands make light work,' you know. You must feel that you're one of the family to-day, Jean, for we're always glad of one more."

There were twenty-six to sit down to the Thanksgiving dinner, nineteen at the large table and seven children at a little one placed in the kitchen. Jean decided that she had never before seen such quantities of food, for in addition to the preparations Mrs. Fairfax had made, every one of the guests had contributed

what he thought to be his share. There were turkeys and chickens, vegetables of all kinds, puddings, pies, cakes, fruit, nuts, and candy passed and repassed until all declared they could eat no more.

After dinner there were games and music and the children went outdoors to slide. About six o'clock Mrs. Fairfax suggested supper, but she could find no one inclined to eat except the children, who came in hungry again after their vigorous exercise. Some of the families having a long distance to ride felt obliged to leave at seven, and from then until ten o'clock there was a general departure. When the last sleigh drove out of the yard Elizabeth dropped into her father's old arm-chair with, "Oh, I'm tired, but wasn't it splendid?"

The next two days were filled with happy experiences for Jean. She coasted on a neighboring hill, drove over to "Aunty" Wilbur's for a "left over" Thanksgiving dinner, went down to Cousin Mary Fairfax's to a candy-pull, and helped Elizabeth in her household duties. She fairly reveled in the outdoor life

and the beauty of the hilltop, and declared that for the first time since she had left California was she really living. Before she realized it, Saturday night came and the visit was almost at an end.

After supper, Jean and Dick found themselves alone again before the fireplace and Dick asked that she finish her story of the camp in the mountains which had been interrupted Wednesday evening. When she finished the narrative, she timidly asked Dick if he would read her some of his poems.

"No, I'll not read them to you, but I'll recite them to you if you care to have me." In his sweet, low voice, very similar to his father's, he recited one after another of his poems, short little things, to be sure, but full of feeling and the promise of what was to come later on.

"Splendid," said Jean, when he had finished; "I know you're going to make something of this gift, aren't you?"

"Yes, if I ever have an opportunity. I want to study and have the best education it's possible to get. Since I've had the fever I've wondered if I shall ever get to college. I'm

not nearly as strong as I used to be, and sometimes it seems as if I never would be again, but I must live, I must amount to something. I've got too much to live for to give up now."

"What do you intend to do with your education, Richard?"

"I don't know yet, Jean, but a man can do anything if he's educated. Then the whole world's open to him, but when he's not it closes its heavy gates to him and he can beat against them in vain. What are you fitting yourself for, Jean?"

"Why, Dick, I'm almost ashamed to tell you. I've never thought anything about the real purpose of college. I came to Ashton because my father and brothers thought it the best place for me to go. I'm only going to be there one year, and after that I think I'll study music. So far this year I've amounted to nothing; I haven't done any studying and received two faculty warnings. That's pretty serious, you know, but I'm going back Monday morning with the firm determination to do something. You and Elizabeth are an inspiration to me and I'm not going to waste any



"I DON'T KNOW YET, JEAN, BUT A MAN CAN DO ANYTHING IF
HE'S EDUCATED."—Page 152.

longer the opportunities that are waiting for me. And don't you get discouraged and worried about not going to college. You're going, I know you are, and next year, too. I've made up my mind to that, and in the meantime I shall need lots of encouragement as an inspiration from you on your hilltop. You'll never know all that this visit has meant to me, and I thank you all for taking me right into your family. This is a secret for us alone, Dick. Please don't say anything about it to the others, for maybe they wouldn't understand, but here's my hand on it, Dick. You've my promise that from now on I'll make something more of myself."

CHAPTER VIII

THE CORAL BEADS

MONDAY morning at half-past eleven o'clock Jean reported at the office in answer to the summons she had received. The clerk, Miss Stetson, led her into the dean's private office and there she found Miss Thurston awaiting her. As yet Jean had met her only in a social way and she felt a little ashamed at the thought of what brought her there.

"Good morning, Miss Cabot. Take this chair here by the window. I have a little matter to talk over with you. I find you have cut Chapel ten times since the opening of college, which is altogether too many times. Do you realize that only thirteen cuts are allowed for the whole first semester? Chapel-cutting is a very serious offense here and I hope I shall not have to speak to you about it again. And then in the matter of gymnasium, Miss Matthews

reports an utter lack of interest on your part in the classes and frequent absences. Gymnasium is required work and should be completed satisfactorily freshman year. I'm afraid, Miss Cabot, that you are not taking college seriously enough."

"I agree with you, Miss Thurston; I have not taken it seriously enough in the past, but from now on I intend to go at things differently. I do not think you will ever need to call me here again. I'm sure I shall never be an honor pupil, but I mean to do the best that's in me. It will be hard work, for I have practically all the work of the past three months to make up besides a condition in French to remove."

"Yes, it will be hard, Miss Cabot, but I have the confidence that you can do it if you've made up your mind to it. That's all for to-day, thank you."

As Jean left the office she started off in the direction of the library. There were some references in English literature which she wanted to look up as soon as possible. To tell the truth, it was the first time she had been

to the library except the evening she had rescued Elizabeth from spending the night there, and she knew nothing about the system. However, she found Natalie Lawton in the magazine room and told her what she wanted.

“Why, Jean, aren’t you getting rather studious all of a sudden? Come right over here into the English department. You can take any of the books down to read here, or if you want to take books home for a week’s use ask the librarian for a card and have the book charged. I always prefer to do my hard studying in my room, for there are so many girls down here talking and walking round that I can’t ever get my mind on what I’m reading. After you get your books I want to talk to you a minute about basket-ball. When you’re ready, come out to the desk and I’ll help you.”

After Jean found the two books she needed and had obtained permission to keep them a week she and Natalie left the building and strolled slowly up to Merton. “I wonder if you’ve ever thought about athletics at college, Jean. I think you ought to make something,

sure. It's up to you to choose what appeals most to you and try for all you're worth to make it. Every girl ought to do something for her college and her class, and it's only the exceptional girl that can do more than one thing well. Some make the glee club, some basket-ball, some the crew, some the track team, and some tennis. I've been thinking it over lately and I've decided that you're just the sort for basket-ball. If you don't make the college team perhaps you can make the 1915 team, and it's really more fun to make that than the other, for the freshman-sophomore basket-ball game is the biggest thing of the year. Basket-ball practice begins this week and I want to see you out Wednesday afternoon. Next to tennis, basket-ball is the very best sport I know of. You've got to try for tennis, too, in the spring, but that's a long way off. Will you go out for basket-ball?"

"Yes, Natalie, if I have the time, but I've got to devote myself a little more to study from now on, so don't expect me to practise very often. I'll make an awful try, for I've always wanted to be able to play basket-ball. I've

never been in a game in my life, so of course I couldn't hope to make anything."

"Lots of girls make the teams who have never played till they came here. It's good hard practice does it. To change the subject, what kind of a time did you have in New York?"

"I didn't go. Tuesday night I got a telegram from Tom saying my aunt was sick and our visit was all off."

"But you didn't stay at college, did you?"

"No; I went home with Elizabeth and had a perfectly wonderful time. I've never been in the country before, and of course there was something new for me to do all the time. And she has the nicest family I've ever met. None of us here at college half appreciate Elizabeth. I have discovered lots of things about her that I never would have dreamed of, and I think you other girls will, too, as you come to know her. Are you going right in to supper or will you come up to my room while I brush up a bit?"

"I think I'll just stop a minute in Clare Anderson's room to help her a little on her al-

gebra. She asked me this noon if I'd go in before supper. Poor little thing, she's having a terrible struggle with it and I pity her from the bottom of my heart. You ought to thank your lucky stars that you're not taking mathematics. Here we are at her room. See you later," and the two girls parted on the second floor.

After supper it was Jean's turn to play for the dancing, so Marjorie Remington did not have an opportunity to talk to her, although she had tried to ever since dinner. The minute Jean arose from the piano Marjorie hurried up to her and asked her to come up to her room for a few moments. "I hear you didn't go to New York after all, Jean, but to your roommate's instead," said Midge, after they were comfortably seated in 47. "What possessed you to spend five perfectly good days with that stick? You knew I was going to be in Boston at my aunt's and would love to have you with me. I should think you would have thought of that and come and told me. I never enjoyed myself more in all my life. Jack certainly outdid himself to give me a good time.

"What on earth could you find to do up in the country with Elizabeth? I think I'd prefer staying in my room here for a vacation to having to visit with such a little, insignificant goody-good as she is."

Jean had listened as long as she could, and she stood up and started for the door, saying, "Marjorie, Elizabeth is my room-mate and I love her dearly and shall not stay here a minute longer to hear you abuse her. Unless you are willing to show her some respect I do not care for your friendship," and she walked out into the hall.

"Jean, pardon me," said Marjorie, hastening after her, "I didn't realize you two were such great friends. When did all this happen? Must have been rather sudden. By the way, have you found your coral beads?"

"Why, Marjorie, how did you know I'd lost them?"

"Oh, I heard all about it. A little bird told me," said Marjorie, as she shut the door into her room.

When Jean entered her own room she found Elizabeth waiting for her. She was sitting at

her desk and held in one hand Jean's coral beads.

"Oh, Jean, what do you think! I've found your coral beads, but in the queerest place. I just went to my desk to get my fountain pen which I keep in the little drawer at the right, and there were the beads. How do you suppose they got there? Some one must have put them there, but you don't believe I did it, do you?"

"No, indeed, Elizabeth. You'd be the last person in the world to put them there."

Without another word Jean turned and almost ran up to Grace Hooper's room and fortunately found her alone. "Gracie, did you tell any one besides Mary Boynton about my losing my beads?"

"No, Jean; don't you know we decided it was best to say nothing about it. Have you found them?"

"Yes, they were only misplaced, so please don't say anything more about it to anybody. I'm glad now that I didn't put up a notice on the bulletin board; it would have caused so much talk. Good-by. I can't stop;

I've a lot of studying to do," and she hurried on to Mary Boynton's room, where she found Mary and her room-mate hard at their lessons for the next day.

"Please excuse me, Ethel, if I take Mary out in the hall to whisper to her a moment." When they shut the door behind them Jean began excitedly, "Mary Boynton, did you tell any one besides Grace Hooper about my losing my coral beads? I've found them again; they were only misplaced, and I'm sorry I bothered you about them. Did you tell any of the girls?"

"No, Jean; to tell you the honest truth, I haven't thought about the matter since Tuesday night. You were coming to me Monday morning if you didn't find them, and when you didn't appear I decided you'd found them."

"Well, please don't say or think anything more about the matter. Sorry to have taken you from your studying. Did you have a pleasant vacation?"

"Yes; I went home with Ethel. Come up and see us when you can stay longer. Good night."

Jean hastened down the corridor and up the stairs and along fourth floor until she came to Marjorie Remington's room. She hesitated a moment at the door and then hearing no voices she knocked. Marjorie appeared and looked a little surprised to see Jean back so soon, but she motioned her to a comfortable rocker and offered her a plate of fudge which looked as if it had just been made. Jean refused the chair and the candy and stood perfectly still in the center of the room, without saying a word. Marjorie, to relieve the situation, said, "I'm glad you've come back, Jean. Can't you sit down and talk to me? I'm awfully lonesome to-night."

"No; I can only stay a moment, Marjorie. I came in to tell you that I've found my coral beads and to ask you why you put them in Elizabeth's desk."

"Why, Jean, what do you mean? What have I got to do with your coral beads? I don't understand what you're talking about."

"Well, if you will not answer my first question, will you tell me who told you I had lost my beads?"

"I did tell you it was a little bird," answered Marjorie, laughingly.

"This is no time for joking, Marjorie. I ask you once more to explain it to me."

"And if I refuse?"

"Well, if you refuse I shall give you my explanation."

"Very well, your explanation then."

"For some reason all the year you have disliked my room-mate and have tried to make her uncomfortable on every possible occasion. Lately you seem to have had the same feeling towards me. When you were talking to me last Tuesday evening as I was packing, you must have taken my coral beads when I went into the bedroom to get my opera coat, and sometime later, probably on Sunday, before we arrived home, you put them in Elizabeth's desk to point suspicion towards her. Fortunately I have come to know Elizabeth so much better these last few days than all the rest of the term that I am sure stealing is the very last thing she would resort to. It is true that she is poor and has none of the things that you and I have, in abundance, but she is honest and conscien-

tious, and kind to every one with whom she comes in contact. No one knows what I have just told you but ourselves, and I ask you now to tell me why you did such a thing. You may be perfectly sure that I never shall say anything about it if you will promise never to do such a thing again."

"Well, Jean, you're a regular old Sherlock Holmes. There isn't very much for me to say now. It's pretty much as you've said. I did take the beads and put them in Elizabeth's desk because I wanted you to believe she stole them. I've never liked her from the first time I saw her. I was provoked that she broke up our plans for the first night at college by coming in late. I'm jealous, horribly jealous, and I didn't want her to be your friend. I was disappointed because you didn't join Gamma Delt. I've wanted you all along for my best friend, and I saw I was gradually losing you. I haven't many friends and I couldn't stand yours. That's all. What do you think of me now?"

Jean answered very slowly, "I'm very sorry, Marjorie. I had hoped from the first that we

might be good friends. You were kind to me and seemed like a girl after my own heart. We still can be friends, I hope, but you must not injure me or any of my friends. We'll forget this incident and begin over again if you say so."

"All right, Jean. Thank you for your kindness. I'm afraid I don't deserve it. You see what a nasty disposition I've got, but I'll try to conquer it in the future. Now won't you stay a while? I want to tell you about my good times in Boston."

"No; not to-night, Marjorie; I'm going to study, but some other time I'll be glad to hear all about it. Good night." And then Jean opened her own door and said to Elizabeth, "Now, dear, I'm ready for the German lesson."

CHAPTER IX

THE CHAFING-DISH PARTY

“**E**LIZABETH, have the girls announced the date of the French play?”

“Yes, I think it’s December eighteenth, the Wednesday night before college closes. Of course you’re going?”

“Yes, and I’ve been thinking I’d invite Constance Huntington out for the play and have a rabbit afterward. I haven’t made anything but fudge in my chafing-dish since I bought it, and it’s about time I did. We could have ten or twelve of the girls in after the play and get permission to stay up a little later than usual. I think I’ll write Connie to-day and invite her out. Would you mind sleeping with Anne Cockran that night so Connie could have your bed?”

“Why, of course not, Jean; I’d be glad to

do it and anything else I can to help you. Who's in the play?"

"I don't know many of them, but Peggy Allison is to be a man and Alice Cunningham's got the star girl's part. They say she's a wonder when it comes to acting. Then Bess Atherton and Joe Knight and Fliss White and Mary Brownell are in it, but I don't know the rest very well. None of the girls from my division are in the club, for you have to be at least a soph. to be eligible and then only a small proportion of the upper-class girls make it, for you have to get high rank in French. O dear, I'd never make it if I studied a hundred years. I can't seem to get it through this stupid old head of mine, and as for talking it and acting it too — why, it's simply beyond my comprehension."

Jean wrote her letter to Constance and soon received word that she would be delighted to accept the invitation and would be out early in the afternoon, but she would have to take the first train back in the morning as she had a lesson at noon.

The morning of the eighteenth was dull and

cloudy, and before noon it was snowing hard and had every appearance of a bad storm. Jean stood at the window after dinner and watched the whirling snowflakes. "She won't come, I know she won't come, if it snows like this, and after I've gone and made all those elaborate preparations I call it a mean shame. Lucky I went down to the Square yesterday and bought the food, for I shouldn't enjoy lugging things home to-day in this storm. Well, if she doesn't come we'll celebrate just the same. I hope it won't be so deep by night that we can't get up to the gym. I think I'll do my packing now, for I sha'n't have much more time before the train starts unless I sit up to-night after the girls go. You tell your people, Elizabeth, that I'm very much obliged for their dandy invitation for the holidays, but I simply can't postpone my New York visit again. But there are other vacations coming, and I'll be pretty glad to go home with you then. Here's a box I want you to put into your suit-case, but it's not to be opened until Christmas morning, and this letter's for Dick, but it's so valuable I won't trust it to Uncle

Sam and I want you to put it in his stocking, or if he's too old to hang up his stocking you can put it under his plate at breakfast. I wonder when my box from home will arrive. Father wrote me he had sent it. We always hang up our stockings at home Christmas Eve and then have a big Christmas tree at night. It's the first time I've ever missed it, and unless I'm having an awfully good time in New York, I'll be pretty homesick."

Jean worked hard at her packing and after she had finished she went downstairs to do a little practising. The piano was so arranged that she had a good view of Faculty Row and it must be confessed that she kept her eyes there as much as on her music. At last she saw Constance battling against the wind and the snow and she ran to the door to greet her. "Oh, I'm so glad you've come, Constance! I was afraid you couldn't get over here. Are the cars on time, or did you come by train?"

"I went across the city on the Elevated and took the train out. It isn't deep enough yet to affect the trains, but it will be soon if it

keeps up like this. The wind is so strong it's beginning to drift. By morning I may not be able to get back or you to go to New York. I thought I'd never get up the Row; as it is, my feet are soaked. Let me borrow your slippers and some dry stockings and I'll be all right. I'm crazy to see your room, Jean. Those snapshots you sent are mighty attractive, but I know the original's lots better."

"Fine," said Constance after she had stepped into 45. "It's so simple, not packed brimful with the useless trifles one generally sees in college girls' rooms. You can find your way around in these rooms all right. You ought to see the box I live in. Positively we have to move some of our furniture out into the hall at night before we can get undressed and into bed. You don't mind if I look around, do you? I love new things. What a splendid picture of Tom! He didn't give me one; guess I'll have to remind him of it. What's this picture of an old farmhouse on your desk?"

"That's my room-mate's home in Newburgh. You know I spent the Thanksgiving

holidays there and quite fell in love with the place."

"With the place or somebody on the place? Come, Jean, 'fess up'; don't keep any secrets from me."

"Well, both, Connie; they're the nicest family I've met in the East. Here, put on these stockings and slippers and dry your feet on the radiator or you'll catch your death-o'-cold. Then we'll go downstairs and see some of the girls. I've invited a few up here after the play, but I promised one or two who are very anxious to meet you that I'd take you in to see them before supper. I hope you'll like the girls out here. I think they're a mighty jolly lot. My room-mate is studying algebra in one of the freshman rooms, but she'll be back before long. She's quiet, but there's ever so much to her."

Presently they started down to Peggy Allison's room and found she and Natalie had made tea for them and had sandwiches, nuts and candy. "You'll spoil our appetites for supper, Peggy, with all this glorious feed."

"Just as well, Jean," said Peggy; "it's

Wednesday night and we always have beans. I think baked beans on Saturdays and Wednesdays, too, is the limit."

"Well," said Natalie, "let's not go down for supper. We can stay here and eat all we want to. I don't believe Peg will eat anything, she's so excited. She's been rehearsing all the afternoon, and all the morning she worked on the scenery. She's got a stunning costume and make-up. Wait till you see her and you'll say she's the handsomest cavalier you've ever set eyes on, and fall in love with her on the spot. Isn't it a shame it's storming so hard? I don't believe half of the guests will come, but perhaps Mlle. Franchant will let them repeat it after vacation. It's a shame after everybody has worked so hard."

"Thanks for your invitation for supper, Nat, but I think Constance and I had better go downstairs, for I want her to see our dining-room and the girls. Why, there's the bell this minute and we intended to go into some of the other rooms. Good luck to you, Peggy; I know you'll be the bright and shining star. Oh, where is your seat, Natalie? Ours are in

‘G.’ We freshmen in the house got some together. Don’t forget you two are coming up to our room after the play. I’ve got permission for us to stay up till eleven o’clock, so if the play is late, hustle down as soon as you can.”

The play was held in the gymnasium, and by eight o’clock it was crowded to the doors in spite of the storm. The girls were greatly disappointed that they could not wear their best-looking gowns, but it was dangerous to risk them in the drifting snow, so most of them wore light waists with their dark skirts. The French play always was considered one of the events of the year and anticipated by the whole college. This year the play presented was “Andromaque,” and given wonderfully well. Of course the most interesting parts were those where the girls took the parts of men. As the masculine element were not invited to attend the performance, the girls felt free to dress as fancy prompted them and, as Natalie had said, “did make perfectly stunning men.” All the girls did well, and unless one were prejudiced, one had to admit that one

girl did no better than another. There was so much applause and encoring that it was nearly ten before the last act began.

For some time Jean had been getting nervous and every little while whispered to Constance, "If they don't finish soon we won't have any time for the rabbit. Usually we can't have company in our rooms after ten, but to-night is a special occasion and the girls can stay till eleven. An hour isn't very long for a party."

"This is great, Jean," said Constance; "I don't understand one word of French, but I think it's stacks of fun to watch them. It's the first time I've ever seen girls play men's parts. Never mind if we don't have time for the rabbit; it isn't the best thing in the world to be eating at eleven o'clock at night, you know."

"Well," said Jean, "I shall be disappointed if we don't make it. I've been wanting some for ages. Oh, I know this must be the end. Wasn't it splendid? Now I feel lots better that it's over. Come on, girls! Hustle up; you've all got to help me. Don't get lost in

the snowdrifts, for it wouldn't be any fun to-night to have to hunt you up."

The six freshmen and Constance went down to the Hall together and up into 45; a little later came Marjorie Remington and Sallie Lawrence and Grace Hooper and Natalie Lawton. "Where's Peggy?" asked Jean.

"She'll be here in a moment; she stopped to wash off a little of the paint and get into some decent clothes."

"Oh," said Grace Hooper, "why didn't she come the way she was? Wasn't she perfectly adorable? I'd be only too glad to let her make love to me. I'm going to try for the French club next year."

"Now, Grace," said Jean, "make yourself useful as well as ornamental. Please beat this egg. You'll have to use a fork; it's the nearest thing to an egg-beater I can find. Marjorie, will you put the crackers on the plates? Sallie, cut up the cheese, will you?" and she gave everybody something to do. By the time the work was all distributed, Peggy burst into the room crying, "*J'ai faim, j'ai faim, mes chères enfants*. Oh, I forgot, I

mustn't make so much noise; it's after ten and some of the girls are trying to get to sleep, but I'm so tickled the old French play is over at last that I could shout for joy. Wasn't it awful there where I forgot? I knew I should, for I did at every rehearsal. Here, Jean, what is there for me to do?"

"Nothing, Miss Star Actress, or should I say Mr. Star Actor; you have entertained us so well all the evening that we'll let you continue to do so until we've something to eat. Oh, dear, I haven't a bit of alcohol; I knew I'd forget something. Who's got some to spare? Midge, you're the nearest, please skip over to your room and get some."

When Marjorie returned with a huge bottle, Jean filled the lamp of her chafing-dish, not noticing that she was spilling some drops of the alcohol on the papers she had left on the table after undoing the numerous packages. She put the ingredients into the dish and they lighted the lamp. All went well for a moment or two and she kept stirring the melted butter and cheese. Now that their work was done the girls felt freer to talk and left Jean to her-

self. She went over to her closet to take out a box of chocolates which she had hidden there and then circulated them among the girls. When she returned to the table she saw that some of the alcohol which she had dropped on the platter was burning. Thinking it would do no harm she let it burn until it blazed up and caught the papers near by that had been wet with the drops of alcohol. In a moment they were all ablaze and the girls were so frightened that they stood still without knowing what to do. Danger threatened Merton and perhaps all Ashton, and something must be done at once. Quick as a flash Jean pushed the burning papers onto the platter and took hold of it firmly with both hands.

“Somebody open the south window, quick!” she cried. For a second no one seemed to know just which was the south window or whether there was any window in the room. Then Elizabeth ran to the window and opened it wide and Jean in a flash was in front of it and threw the blazing platter and its contents down into the snow below.

As soon as the danger was over the girls



"SOMEBODY OPEN THE SOUTH WINDOW, QUICK!"—Page 178.



realized what Jean had done. "How could you do it, Jean? How did you think of it? Oh, look at your hands and face; you've burned them!" they all cried.

"No; I haven't. Not badly; just one thumb and it doesn't hurt much. I guess I've singed my eyebrows and a little of my front hair, but the rabbit is spoiled. Isn't it a shame? But I'm not going to let that perfectly good chafing-dish stay down in the snow and get buried up and stay there all vacation. I'm going to put on my rubber boots and a short skirt and sweater and go down and get it. I don't want any of you to come with me. I know how to unbolt the door, and no one will ever know anything about it if you'll keep it to yourselves. Here, Elizabeth, pass the sandwiches and olives and other eats. I'm determined, though, that you shall have a rabbit and I've got enough stuff here to make another even if there's only enough for one cracker apiece; that's better than nothing."

"But," protested Peggy, "you won't have time; it's almost quarter of eleven now, and you know we must get back to our rooms at

eleven surely or we'll never get permission again."

"Well, girls," said Jean, "I shall make that rabbit to-night if I'm expelled to-morrow. You must go, I suppose, at eleven, but we two can stay up as long as we please in our own room if we're not disturbing any one else. Constance and I will eat all we can to-night, and I'll see that the rest of you get yours to-morrow. Cold rabbit is as good as hot; some like it better, particularly if it's thick and leathery. Aren't these rubber boots grand? I never thought when I bought them last month that I should dedicate them hunting for lost chafing-dishes and rabbits in snowdrifts. Well, here goes, switch the light over to the south window and watch me discover the North Pole, or the chafing-dish. Just wet this handkerchief first, will you, Nat, so I can wind it round my throbbing thumb. How's that for alliteration, freshies; wouldn't that please Miss Whiting?"

After winding the wet handkerchief around her thumb she put on some heavy gloves and was ready to start. The corridors were dark,

for all the lights had been put out at half-past ten. She groped her way along the banisters and managed somehow to reach the lower hallway. It seemed as though every step had made the long stairs creak and protest against what she was doing, and she was sure when she hit against a hall chair that she would awaken Mrs. Thompson. She waited a few moments and listened, but apparently Mrs. Thompson was sleeping peacefully, little dreaming of what was happening just outside her sacred domain. She finally located the great bolt and in a moment had the door open. She moved over the door-mat to prevent the doors closing, for if the wind should blow them together again she would not be able to open them unless one of the girls came down and helped her.

Out on the steps her courage failed her for a moment, for the snow was whirled in every direction by the terrific wind, but she stepped down into it and instantly was up to her knees. She decided to give it up and return to the girls, but she hated to be defeated in anything, so attempted it again. She could hardly walk,

but had to scuff along, making her own path. It was a long way down the east side of the dormitory and then round the corner to the south side. The light from 45 shone brightly and guided her to the spot where she expected to find the chafing-dish. At last she reached it and saw the tray sticking up in one place and not far from it the standard and a little farther the two dishes and cover. She gathered them in her arms and started back, after waving to the girls in the upper windows. After she had gone two or three steps she realized that she hadn't found the alcohol lamp, and as that was a very important item, she put the other parts down again and began to hunt for the lost one. It was nowhere to be found and had probably fallen out when she threw the burning mass from the window, and being the smallest part and the lightest had undoubtedly gone the greatest distance, and being the hottest as well, it probably sank down deep in the snow. She was about to give up when her fingers groping around on the surface found what she wanted so badly.

Now that she had it all she returned the

same way she had come, but it was easier now because she had only to retrace her footsteps. Still, it was no easy task and took some little time. Just as she reached the stone steps she heard the campus clock ring out eleven strokes. She entered the door and closed it as cautiously as possible and put the mat in its proper place. Then she groped her way up the three flights of stairs and was soon in 45, breathless but triumphant. "Here it is, girls, and some of the cheese is still in the dish; have some?"

"Jean, you're a hero," said Peggy, "but we mustn't stay another minute; it's already struck eleven. Sorry to have missed the rabbit, but the other things were delicious and your adventure such a novelty in the way of entertainment. Don't do it again, for it's rather dangerous unless one has your nerve. Good night. Tell us the rest of the story in the morning."

"All right, but 'Mum's the word,' girls," said Jean, as she followed them to the door. "At our first reunion after vacation I'll tell you all about the hairbreadth escapes I had in the mad pursuit of the rabbit. Isn't that a

thrilling subject for my next English theme? Quietly, now; don't make any noise; don't anybody stub her toe or trip on the stairs."

"And now," said Jean, as she came back into the room, "I'm going to finish that rabbit if I don't get a particle of sleep to-night. You can retire gracefully, if you so desire, to Elizabeth's bed and I'll stick to my post of duty till the rabbit dies."

"No," said Constance, "I'm not a bit sleepy; I'd rather watch you, but first can't I put something on those burns?"

"No, thanks, Connie, they aren't half bad, and if I keep something wet on my thumb it will be all right."

Into the chafing-dish went all of the remaining ingredients, few to be sure, but enough to half fill the dish. There was no egg but Jean decided to risk it without. She stirred and stirred, but it refused to thicken, and as the college clock struck twelve she decided it never would. "Well, we can put a little in these saucers and eat it with a spoon and perhaps by morning what we leave in the dish will thicken enough to spread on crackers.

I mean that every girl shall have a souvenir of the great and glorious occasion."

They put a little in the saucers and broke in some cracker. Constance took a mouthful and exclaimed, "Oh, Jean, the mustard! How much did you put in?"

"Why, just what the rule said, of course."

"It must be a funny rule, for it's so awfully hot you never can eat it."

"Well, I should say so," said Jean, after a taste. "Let's hope it will cool off by morning. Anyway, I've done what I said I should; it's made and we've eaten some. Now let's go to bed at once. I shall leave all the dishes and cleaning up until morning. Fortunately I have two spare hours before train time and my trunk is all packed. Isn't this room a mess? Let's retire gracefully to our downy couches and forget what we've left behind. Do you think my eyebrows, or rather what there is left of them, look badly?"

"No one would ever know what had happened unless you told them. I think you got out of it mighty easily. It's a wonder you weren't burned badly, or the curtains didn't

catch and start a fire. What a terrible night to have been burned out. Ough! I don't like the idea at all. Are you sure everything is all right out in the study?"

"Why, of course, you big silly. Now calm yourself and get into bed, and we'll talk it over in the morning."

The first thing Jean did after the rising bell awoke her from a sound sleep was to go out into the study and look into the chafing-dish. Yes, the rabbit had hardened and looked anything but attractive. She took two crackers and put the rabbit between them, making a somewhat bulky sandwich in its proportions but nevertheless edible. With Constance's assistance she made twelve of them and wrapped each one in some tissue paper and tied them with narrow white ribbon. Slipping on her kimona and bed shoes she put the packages into a small basket and hastened out in the hall and stopped at the room of each of her guests of the evening before. To each girl she presented a neat package and wishes for a Merry Christmas.

Constance and she were a little late at the

breakfast table but took their places without a smile or look at any of the twelve girls who were awaiting their arrival. Unless one had looked very carefully one would not have perceived that Jean's right thumb was carefully done up in a white bandage. Aside from this there was no indication of the incidents of the previous evening. Breakfast talk centered on the excellence of the French play the night before and the acting of Peggy Allison. Just before breakfast was over Mary Boynton arose and announced two important notices before the departure of the girls for the Christmas holidays.

"The Merton House Entertainment Committee have planned a costume party for January thirteenth, to be limited to the girls of the dormitory. Every girl is expected to be in costume. For further particulars apply to Helena Burrage, Florence Goodnow, and Mabel Addison.

• "The proctors for the two weeks beginning January sixth, have been appointed as follows: first floor, Lena Hutchinson; second floor, Rebecca Chapin; third floor, Mary Andrews;

fourth floor, Jean Cabot; fifth floor, Sarah Dillon. They will meet for a few moments after breakfast in the reading-room."

Then the girls filed out and hurried upstairs for last preparations. The proctors consulted together a few moments and were given instructions as to their duties and then were dismissed. Jean and Constance decided to go to Chapel and clean up afterwards. It took till nearly ten before the last dish was washed and wiped, and Constance had to hurry for the train. "You must be sure to visit me after vacation, but I'll promise you no such exciting times as you gave me. My best to Tom. Thanks for your hospitality," she said as she boarded the train. Jean watched until the train was out of sight and then went up to ten o'clock recitation. At twelve she boarded a crowded train and left Ashton and its problems behind her.

CHAPTER X

THE COSTUME PARTY

THE Christmas holidays passed all too quickly and were crowded to the utmost with good times. It was with a little reluctance that Jean took the noon train from New York on Wednesday, January eighth, for Boston. Tom went with her to the station and saw her safely aboard. There were many of the college girls on the train and as she went through the Pullman looking for her chair she heard Marjorie Remington calling her.

“Here’s a vacant chair beside me, Jean. Come over and sit down in it, even if it isn’t yours, and if any one comes in later to claim it you can move over into your own. I want to hear about your good times, and I’ve got just stacks to tell you.”

The girls kept up a spirited conversation all the way to Boston and one incident followed

another in rapid succession until Marjorie said, "Before we reach Boston I want to tell you a secret, Jean, but first you must promise me not to tell a soul at college." Jean promised faithfully, and Marjorie continued, "Jack and I are engaged. Here's my ring, but I don't dare wear it openly yet, so I shall put it on a chain and wear it around my neck under my dress where no one can see it. You see, father and mother don't quite approve of Jack and wouldn't allow me to announce my engagement, especially while I'm in college, but we couldn't wait any longer and Jack gave me the ring Christmas in a box of candy, so no one suspected. Isn't it a beautiful diamond? You know, Jack has plenty of money in his own name, but father doesn't always approve of the way he spends it. We haven't made any plans yet, but I think we'll be married in the fall. Jack graduates in June, and I surely am not coming back to Ashton another year. I almost fear I'll flunk out at midyear's, but I'm going to dig hard from now on, for I want to be in the East until June and if I should flunk it would be home for me and no Jack.

“To think you haven’t met him yet! Well, you will to-day, for he’s going to meet me at the train if he possibly can. He had to go back earlier than I, for Harvard began last week. I think I’ll stay in town for an early dinner, but I’ll be out before eight. I suppose you’re looking forward with joy to your duties as proctor of fourth floor. I don’t envy you your honor; I suppose it will be thrust upon me soon, for it must be getting pretty near my turn. Well, I sha’n’t bother you, for it’s study for mine every minute till midyear’s. The costume party is the only dissipation that I can allow myself. I made the dandiest costume at home, but I can’t tell you what it is. Did you make one?”

“No, I haven’t had time even to think about one, but I’ll fix up something myself, or hire a costume in town. Like you, I’m going to study as hard as I can so I sha’n’t have time for anything else. I’m awfully surprised to hear you’re engaged. Do you think it’s just right to keep it from your father and mother? I should think you’d want them to know about it first. I should if it were I.”

"But I shouldn't dare tell them now. I'm hoping they'll feel all right about it later. We're almost in Boston now. I do hope nothing will keep Jack from meeting me."

Marjorie was not to be disappointed, for Jack was at the station to meet her, and she proudly introduced him to Jean. He invited her to accompany them up town for dinner, but she declined and left them at the Elevated. When she arrived at Merton she found Elizabeth had not come, but she knew the last train from Wilton Junction reached Boston about eight and she felt sure Elizabeth would take that one.

She was not mistaken, and about half-past eight Elizabeth arrived, very tired from her hard trip. After she had removed her hat and coat, she said, "Has Marjorie Remington returned yet, Jean?"

"I don't know, Elizabeth. I came on with her from New York, but I left her in Boston and she said she was coming out after an early dinner. Why do you ask?"

"I came out from Boston with a girl I thought was she, but she was with some fel-

low I never have seen out here They were walking up the Row very slowly and as I passed them they were talking together very earnestly. From what I heard I could not believe it was Marjorie in spite of the fact that it looked so much like her."

"Probably it was Jack Goodrich from Harvard. He lives in Detroit and he and Marjorie have always been good friends. Now tell me about your vacation."

They began an exchange of experiences but were interrupted every few minutes by girls coming in to welcome them back. Nearly every one ended with, "Did you make your costume for Monday night?" It was late when Jean and Elizabeth found themselves alone without fear of further interruption. "Jean," said Elizabeth, "I want to thank you for what you did for us all at Christmas, and most of all for Brother's gift. He has written you, too, but I must tell you all that it means to me, for I feel as though it were benefiting me as much as him. To think that he can go to college next year! I can hardly believe it now, although I have thought and talked of

little else all the vacation. How could you be so generous?"

"Oh, let's not talk about it, Elizabeth. You know I have more spending money than I know how to use, and father helped some because I wrote him all about Dick and his patience and courage and talent. You can finish your course, too, perhaps, and Dick be in college at the same time. So let's not ever say anything more about it."

The costume party was to be held in the dining-room, reading-room, and hall of Merton, and all the afternoon the girls strung Japanese lanterns and brought down furniture from rooms above to make as many cozy corners as space allowed. Supper was to be a little early, and after it was over the tables and chairs were to be moved out and the floors waxed. The electric lights were covered with red paper to dim their brightness, and the piano was moved out into the center of the living-room so that the music could be heard better in all the rooms.

By eight o'clock most of the girls were downstairs, and in their costumes and masks

presented an attractive appearance. Half of the girls wore men's costumes of all periods, and there were kings and queens, clowns and French dolls, Quakers and follies, peasant maids from many countries, shepherds and shepherdesses, Topsyies, Marguerites and priests, nuns and dancing maids were present, and others too numerous to mention. A local pianist had been hired, and she was the only one in the room not in costume. Even Mrs. Thompson was somewhere in the merry throng.

There was first a grand march to be followed by dancing until ten o'clock, when the unmasking was to take place and light refreshments served. Gradually, little groups of girls thought they recognized each other and surmised the identity of certain others. Jean and Elizabeth and Sallie Lawrence were resting after a strenuous Virginia Reel. "Who is that couple who have danced together all the evening, the tall monk and the demure sister of charity? Probably she thinks it's her duty to confess to him for her worldly dissipation. The sister of charity looks like Marjorie Remington, but who can the monk

be? Marjorie doesn't generally remain so faithful to one partner," said Sallie.

"It is Marjorie," said Jean; "I can tell her walk anywhere and I'm sure those are her pumps. She told me she bought them in Detroit this last vacation. I'm sure I can't imagine who her partner is. The tallest girl I know is Mary Stickney. It must be she, but isn't it queer Marjorie should care to dance so often with her? Probably she thinks it's more picturesque to dance with a monk. I remember asking Mary this afternoon if she was going to-night and she said she didn't believe so, but if she did she'd have to get up something very simple at the last moment. That monk's costume is surely the simplest one here."

After several of the girls had asked the charming sister of charity to dance and she had shaken her pretty head and persisted in dancing with the monk, all the others began to wonder a bit and talk among themselves. "Who is the monk?" was on everybody's tongue, and it was pretty generally conceded to be Mary Stickney.

Just before ten the monk and his fair partner slowly left the main room for a lemonade table at the end of the hall. Most of the others were dancing, but Jean, very tired with the excitement of the evening, had slipped alone into a little cozy corner just beyond the lemonade table. She did not intend to watch or to listen, but she could not help herself. When the two dancers were left to themselves, she heard Marjorie Remington say, "Hasn't it been splendid, Jack? Not a soul ever would suspect, for you certainly took every precaution. But I think you'd better go now, for it's almost time to unmask. Take off your robe and mask in the outer hall and you'll find your cap and coat and shoes in my suit-case there in the right-hand corner. You'll not meet any one, for everybody in the house is at the dance and it's too late for outsiders to be coming in. Still, be cautious. Let me know how you get back to Cambridge, and come out as soon as you can. Good night, dear. Don't let anything happen to you." And the black-robed priest disappeared from view and the demure little sister of charity sat

down a few minutes in the dimly-lighted hall to rest.

Jean did not leave the cozy corner until she was sure Marjorie had joined the dancers. She leaned back against the pillows, faint with astonishment and dismay. What should she do? One idea after another rushed through her brain and confused her more and more. She must act quickly, or it would be too late. Stealing into the outer hall she found the black robe and mask Jack had left there and she put them on over her Old Mother Hubbard costume. She knew she was not as tall as Jack was, but still there was not such a great difference and it was worth the risk. Slowly wending her way back into the main room, she found the sister of charity just about to dance with a Little Boy Blue. She put her arm round Marjorie and drew her away before Little Boy Blue realized what was happening.

Marjorie herself was so astonished she could say nothing at first, but after a moment whispered, "Jack, how careless; you must go. We're going to unmask after this dance and if you're found here I'll be expelled to-mor-

row." But the monk answered never a word, but danced as smoothly and gently as though he had heard nothing. Again Marjorie whispered, "Oh, Jack, you must go! Don't wait another minute or I'm lost."

Just then the music stopped and some one cried, "Masks off!" and there was a general pulling off of masks amid peals of laughter. As Marjorie gazed into Jean's face a look of terror settled over her own as she gasped "You!" but Jean said quietly, "We'll talk about it later up in your room. Don't leave until the others do," and she hurried away. There were many surprises at the unmasking, but the greatest was Jean's. Several of the girls, among them Elizabeth and Sallie, declared they had recognized her earlier in the evening in another costume, but she refused to answer except as she whispered in Elizabeth's ear, "Don't ask too many questions. Trust me; it's all right."

Then the refreshments were served and still there was time for a few more dances. Jean went to the piano and offered to play so that the pianist might dance a little. Really, Jean

needed to think and be away from the girls. She hardly knew what she was playing, so absorbed was she with the thought of what Marjorie had done and what she as proctor of fourth floor must do before very long. Such a thing could not be passed by unnoticed, and still what a terrible thing it would be to have Marjorie expelled through her. She had heard of people sacrificing duty for friendship, and she wondered what she would do when it came time to decide. Once the room seemed to grow black and she thought she would fall off the stool, but by a supreme effort she shook off the approaching faintness and finished the waltz she was playing. Then she arose and left the piano and walked over to Mrs. Thompson. "I think I will be excused, if you please, Mrs. Thompson. I feel a little tired. It's been a splendid party. Good night."

Elizabeth was watching her and noticed her pallor and swaying body. "What is the matter, Jean? What has happened? This isn't a bit like you. Can I help you?"

"No, Elizabeth; I shall be all right as soon as I get upstairs. Please don't leave until the

others do." Then she crept up the stairs and when she entered her own room she closed the door and locked it. She quickly tore off the two costumes, leaving the black one on the couch where Elizabeth would be sure to see it; then she threw the Old Mother Hubbard dress into a trunk which was in her closet, closed the lid, and locked it. Putting on her kimona she sat down to think and wait for the girls to come upstairs.

When Elizabeth entered the room, Jean was more like herself and talked gayly about the girls' costumes. "I'll go out in the corridor and put out the lights, and I've got a message to deliver to one of the girls, so don't wait up for me." She put out all the lights on fourth floor and then walked slowly up and down the corridor three or four times before knocking softly at Marjorie's door. Without waiting for her to reply, Jean entered the room and closed the door gently after her.

"Marjorie, remember I come here to-night as proctor as well as friend. What you have done is awful. I can hardly think about it calmly. How did you dare think of such a

thing? You've broken every rule of our house, you've deceived every girl here and Mrs. Thompson as well, you've committed an offense worthy of expulsion, you've disgraced yourself and all the rest of us. Now what's to be done? I'm the only girl who knows what has happened, although others were mystified at my being the monk and the Mother Hubbard, too. That will be forgotten in a day or two, but what you have done is of more serious import. You wonder why I dressed up in Jack's costume? I was tired of dancing and went out into the cozy corner beyond the lemonade table to rest a little. Before I had been there long you and Jack came and I could not help overhearing your conversation. After he had gone I knew you would go back to the other rooms alone and every one would wonder where your constant attendant had gone. Questions would be asked and you would have to give some sort of an explanation. The idea came to me to put on Jack's costume for the remainder of the evening and save you from a difficult position. Now I have given

you an explanation of my conduct and I ask for one of yours."

"There isn't one, Jean; except that when I told Jack about the party he suggested that he come out, too, dressed as a monk. He planned everything so well that I thought there was no danger and it was a lark. I was tired of dancing with girls and I longed for a dance with a real man, and you know Jack dances divinely. I guess Ashton is no place for me, after all, and you might as well have it out to-morrow and get me expelled. I don't mind leaving college, but I hate to go home and have Jack so far away. It's a long time till June, and I'll be awfully lonesome out there without him."

"No, Marjorie; I don't want you publicly expelled. I'm sorrier for you than I've ever been for any one in all my life. I wish I were not proctor to-night, and I'd say nothing about it. As it is I shall not report you unless you refuse to comply with my plans. You are to leave college to-morrow. You'll say you were called home unexpectedly. I'll leave the

reason to you, but I must see you on the train for Detroit and see the telegram you send home to your father to meet you. Jack is to know nothing about it until you write him from Detroit. You can pack what clothes you need and I will see that the other things are sent on at your request. You say that you never have cared for college, but I am sure you prefer to leave it honorably rather than in disgrace. Will you think it over to-night and let me know your decision in the morning? If you do not come down to breakfast I shall know you have decided to do as I suggest, and I promise you, under those conditions I shall never say a word to any one about the affair. I hope you'll do the right thing. Good night."

Before noon the next day all Merton was talking about Marjorie Remington's sudden call home. Lill Spalding and Jean helped her pack and went in town with her to see her take the late afternoon train for Detroit. At night the excitement had somewhat subsided, for Marjorie's friends had been few and the others were little concerned with her affairs.

There were much more serious matters pending, for midyear's examinations were only three weeks away and the midnight oil was already beginning to be burned.

CHAPTER XI

MIDYEAR'S

THE next three weeks the girls in Merton did study, as did most of the other girls. All the classes were having reviews and the whole college had settled down to good hard work. Social life had practically stopped, except for an occasional spread or tea, and society meetings on Monday nights were about the only diversions. When she felt she could afford the time Jean had gone to basket-ball practice, for she secretly longed to make the freshman team, but openly she said nothing about it. She knew everything depended upon the midyear marks, and although there had been a decided improvement in her work since Thanksgiving, still she knew it looked a little doubtful in French and German. However, she was confident that by June she would be doing at least passing work.

About a week before the examinations began, Jean went over to Wellington one evening to study psychology with Lois Underwood, who was in her division. As it happened, several of the Wellington girls were in the same division and Lois called them in to the "quiz," as she called their evening's work. The girls really worked hard until about nine o'clock and had covered considerable ground when they began talking about hypnotism, a favorite subject of Miss Washburn, the psychology instructor.

"I think Miss Washburn's positively daffy on the subject," said Jean; "I don't believe there's anything in it at all. She'll be sure, though, to ask us something about it in the exam. I suppose if we want to pass the course we'll have to agree with her whether we believe in it or not."

"But I do believe in it," said Lois Underwood. "Bess and I have been reading up a lot on the subject and we have been experimenting on each other and find we can do lots of the things the books tell about. It's easy enough if you just make up your mind to it."

The other girls laughed and scoffed at this, and declared Bess and Lois were getting daffy over the subject, too.

"Well, all right, girls," said Lois, "if you don't believe it, I'll let Bess hypnotize me. You've all got to keep perfectly quiet and not laugh if she doesn't succeed at first, for we can't always tell what will be the result."

"As I said before," Jean replied, "I don't believe there's anything in it, but I'm perfectly willing to be convinced."

The girls shut their books and awaited the exhibition. Bess Johnson arose from her chair and looked steadily into Lois Underwood's eyes as she sat upright on her couch. "Put your mind upon sleep, Lois; sweet, gentle sleep. You're going to sleep for a little while." She stepped up close to her and began rubbing her forehead and temples, saying all the time, "You're beginning to feel sleepy, you know you will sleep, you can't help it. Now you're asleep, asleep, asleep." And at these words Lois fell over on the couch in a deep sleep.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, our fair victim is peacefully sleeping, and those of you

who doubt the fact are at liberty to examine the sleeping beauty as carefully as you please. As a first test I will prick her arm with this needle and if she does not move or cry out you may draw your own conclusions."

She pricked her arm with the needle, but not a movement was made or a sound heard and the girls looked at each other in astonishment. They spoke to her and shook her and pinched her and pulled her hair, but it was in vain, there was no evidence of life. "It is wonderful," said Jean; "I am forced to admit that there's something in it after all. Does every one else believe?" The rest of the girls declared they did, and then Jean suggested that Bess awaken her.

"Very well, girls; it's perfectly simple," and she went up to the couch and began rubbing Lois's forehead and temples, saying firmly, "You are about to awaken, fair one; open thine eyes. Now you are awaking, you know you cannot help it. You are coming to life again, awaken." But Lois did not seem to open her eyes and did not move. She lay as rigid as when she first went into the

sleep. Bess worked over her as hard as she knew how, but could not awaken her. Again and again she shook her until it seemed as though she must open her eyes if there was any life in her.

"Oh, girls, what shall I do? I can't get her to wake up. It's never been like this before. Suppose she never comes out of it. I'll be a murderer. Oh, I promise you if she ever does wake up that I'll never try to hypnotize any one again!"

"Hadn't we better call in the doctor or some of the older girls?" said Jean.

"No, not yet; I'm afraid to. What would they say to me? And if I put her to sleep, I'm the only one that can awaken her. Don't you know that other people have no influence over them?" and she began again to work over her. It was no use, and now the other girls began to get as frightened as Bess, but there seemed nothing to do but to wait.

At last the 9.45 warning bell rang and the girls knew they must leave, especially those who lived in other houses. With tears in her eyes Bess said good-night to the girls and

begged them to say nothing about the matter, assuring them that she knew in time she could awaken Lois. After the door closed on the last girl, Bess returned to the sleeping girl on the couch. She was breathing deeply and so Bess did not despair of her life. She sat beside her and called and called to her to awaken. The moments flew by and the terrified girl felt that she must control herself before she could hope to control another. She must make a supreme effort to undo the harm she had done. She left the couch and walked slowly up and down the room, saying to herself, "Be calm; it must come out all right; she will awaken."

After perhaps half an hour she sat down again on the couch and looked Lois hard in the face. Then she rubbed her forehead and temples exactly as she had done when she sent her into the stupor, and almost screamed, "You must awaken; you must awaken, Lois, or I shall go mad." There was not a sign of awakening, and heartsick and discouraged Bess sank upon her knees almost exhausted. She prayed softly to her Father in Heaven

for help in this awful moment, and then for the last time whispered, "Oh, Lois, Lois, awaken!" and she saw her eyelids begin to move very slightly and then gradually open. "Oh, Lois, you're really awake again; you're awake again. I'm so thankful!"

" 'Thankful,' Bess, why, what do you mean? What are you doing on your knees by my couch? "

" Nothing, Lois, except praying that you'd wake up. Don't you remember anything about to-night? "

" No; all I know is that I'm very, very tired and I feel as though I could sleep a week. What happened? "

" Why, to-night to prove to the girls that there was such a thing as hypnotism, I put you to sleep and I couldn't make you wake up. I've been frightened almost to death ever since and I'll never, never try to hypnotize anybody again as long as I live. I wish I'd never heard anything about the subject. But you're all right now, and that's all I care about. I've had the most awful experience of my life. Look and see if my hair has turned white.

We'd better go to bed now, but I must let the other girls know the first thing in the morning, for they were all as frightened as I."

When the psychology class met next morning it was a pretty sober little group that had studied together the night before, and two of them, at least, were a trifle pale. Miss Washburn could not understand what had fallen over the class, for it was generally very lively and at times troublesome. As luck would have it, after she had finished her lecture she called on Bess Johnson to talk on the subject of hypnotism. To the astonishment of the class (excepting, of course, her companions of the night before), who were accustomed to Bess' brilliant recitations, they heard her say, "I know nothing about it," and she turned as pale as though she had seen her father's ghost, and the question was passed on to Gertrude Jackson, next on the list, who discussed it at some length, until the bell rang and the class was dismissed.

From psychology Jean went into her English class and took her usual seat in the extreme left-hand corner near the open door. It

was theme day, and Miss Whiting was to read some examples of what she considered good and bad themes. Jean listened in vain for one of hers among the good ones, for she had tried hard and was beginning to enjoy her English work. But among the themes Miss Whiting considered poor because of their faulty construction and poor English she recognized two of her recent attempts. She was hurt, and the tears sprang to her eyes to think of Miss Whiting's reading two of her themes before the entire class, as though one wouldn't have been enough! Of course everybody would know they were hers, although she overlooked the fact that no names were mentioned with the criticisms. She felt her face turning scarlet and tears rolling down her cheeks. She couldn't stay there to hear more of her awful themes read and she didn't dare ask Miss Whiting to be excused. She gave one glance at the open door and her mind was made up. Knowing Miss Whiting was very near-sighted, she stole very quietly out of the room before Miss Whiting or hardly any of the girls were aware of it.

No sooner out than she regretted her childish action and she wished she were back in the room. She wandered over to the library, determined to wait until the recitation was over and then go to Miss Whiting and apologize. After the class was dismissed and just as Miss Whiting was gathering up the papers on her desk, Jean walked up to her, smiling sweetly. "I've come to offer you an apology, Miss Whiting. I purposely left your class last hour in the midst of your reading. I felt so badly when you read two of my miserable little themes that I thought I couldn't stand it a moment longer, and as my seat is near the door I took French leave when you were not looking in my direction. It was a very silly thing to do, and I realized it the moment I was out of the room. I'm very sorry and hope you will accept my apology."

"Why, certainly, Miss Cabot. How very thoughtful of you to come and tell me, for unless you had I should have known nothing about it. Let us sit down a moment and talk over your work. This will be a good time for conference, if you can spare the time."

"Yes, indeed," said Jean, as she sat down in the chair beside Miss Whiting.

"Let me see, Miss Cabot, do you care for the subject of English? It seems to me I had got the impression that you did not. Just lately, though, I have noticed a slight change for the better, in your theme work. You seem to be grasping things as though you wouldn't let go. I hope you won't. Things about you are beginning to interest you, and you're describing them excellently. However, your constructions are faulty, but that is a common fault in freshman work, and I read your theme because it furnished criticism applicable to so many other papers. You must not take criticism so to heart, for it is given always with the hope of helping others. I thank you again for coming to tell me what you did. Shall we walk down together? I go as far as Miss Thatcher's."

When Jean entered the dining-room one of the freshmen called out, "Were you ill in English, Jean?"

"Yes, temporarily indisposed, but I'm bet-

ter now, thank you," and smiling, she took her seat.

When the examination lists were posted, Jean found she had psychology and German on Tuesday, French and English on Wednesday, and music on Thursday. Each examination was to last from two to three hours and was to cover all the work of the first semester. The only one she did not dread was music, and she trembled most at thought of French and German.

Monday she crammed and crammed on her German verbs and vocabularies, and at supper declared she would not take another look at them, for she had planned to spend the entire evening reading over psychology notes. When Elizabeth came upstairs after supper, she said she was going to spend the night in Mabel Livingston's room, so they could study mathematics together. Mabel's room-mate was away from college that night, so Elizabeth could have her bed. She collected her books and kissed Jean good-night, warning her not to sit up all night to study.

"After you go, Elizabeth, I'm going to lock the door and I won't open it if people knock all night," she called out to Elizabeth as she left the room. She propped herself up on the couch and drew up the table with her drop-light upon it, and opened her psychology note-book to begin reading her notes. How small her writing looked and how many pages there were to be read! Soon the lines and words began to run together, and all unbeknown to her the note-book slipped to the floor but landed so softly that she did not hear it at all.

The next thing she knew she was sitting up on the couch staring first at the burning light on the table and then at the bright sunshine pouring into the window and then at the open note-book on the floor, and finally at herself fully clothed as though ready for recitation. She looked at her watch and found it had stopped, but she listened for sounds around her and she heard girls talking and walking about as though it were the middle of the day. "What has happened?" she asked herself. "Am I another Rip Van Winkle?" She jumped up, unlocked the door

and ran into the next room. "What time is it, Ann?" she asked.

"Ten minutes past eight, Jean. Where were you at breakfast?"

"Well, if this isn't the greatest joke you ever heard about. I haven't had any breakfast. I lay down on my couch last night right after supper to study for my psychology exam and the next thing I know it's ten minutes past eight and I've been asleep all that time and haven't done a bit of studying. I've had these clothes on since yesterday morning and haven't combed my hair yet, but I've got to go to Chapel, for I don't dare cut and my exam comes the first thing afterward, and I haven't looked at it. What shall I do? If she'll only ask me something I know, which is little enough, I admit, I'm saved. Seems to me I dreamed she asked us to write fully on the subject of memory and give illustrations. I'll just look over the headings on that subject," and she sat down where she was and opened her notebook and read strenuously until the chapel bell rang.

She smiled to herself as she walked into

Miss Washburn's room and saw the blue books on the desks. "To think I've studied just ten minutes for a three-hour exam!" she said to herself. But when she took up the printed list of questions and read the very first, "Outline, develop fully, and give illustrations of the subject of memory," she smiled still more and said, "Well, if I hadn't fallen asleep just when I did, I'd never have dreamed we'd have that question. As it is, I'm all prepared and it's the only thing I know anything about," and she wrote over two hours and felt confident that she had passed in a good paper.

The German examination which followed was much harder, and it seemed as though every time she tried to think of the parts of an irregular German verb the corresponding French word popped into her head. Right ahead of her sat Anne Cockran, writing away at such a rapid rate that Jean felt sure she knew the correct answer to every question and she wished once or twice that she could get a glimpse of her paper. Once she leaned forward a little and as she did so her glance fell on Olive Windman, who was sitting a little

ahead of her to the right. Jean saw her take a little paper covered with very fine writing from the front of her shirt-waist and conceal it in her lap. She looked quickly at Fräulein Weimer, but found her busy correcting notebooks; then she looked down at the paper in her lap and began writing again. It was the first time that Jean had seen open cheating, although she knew it occurred again and again. The very idea of looking at Anne Cockran's paper faded as quickly from her mind as it had entered it, and she blushed at the thought of what she might have done.

At the end of the examination, Fräulein Weimer announced that she had reason to suspect certain members of the class of dishonesty, and all those who had given or taken help in any way during the examination might not pass in their examination books. How thankful Jean was that the number did not include herself, and she was shocked as she laid down her examination book on the table to find that it rested on one marked "Olive Windman."

The French examination next day was hard from beginning to end, and although she did

her very best she felt she had failed. English was easy, and she finished in less than two hours. Her music examination took most of Thursday afternoon, for part of it was on the piano and the rest on harmony. When she had written the last note and signed her name she breathed several deep sighs of relief and started for the gym.

There were two whole days of vacation for her, for she had no more examinations and she meant to put most of her time into basket-ball practice, as the list of freshman candidates was to be posted the next Monday, and she hoped against hope to see her name among them.

Monday was registration day for the second half-year, and every one reported at the office at the appointed time to find her marks and the number of hours she would be allowed to take second half. When Jean received her notification she found she had passed in everything but her French and she was requested to see Mlle. Franchant at once. With fear and trembling she approached her room, for she felt she was about to be told that she must

drop French for the rest of the year. She peeped into the room and saw there were no other students there, so then she walked up to Mlle. Franchant's desk, where she sat writing a letter.

"Come right in, Mlle. Cabot. I want to speak to you just one moment. I had to report a failure in your French work first semester, but it is not so bad a one that you must drop the subject. You have improved since I warned you and I think with good hard work you will pass at the June examination. If I can help you in any way I shall be glad to do so."

"Thank you," said Jean, and she left the room saying to herself, "Well, I've lost my chance at basket-ball, but I'll pass that subject in June or know the reason why."

CHAPTER XII

BEFORE THE FRESHMAN-SOPHOMORE GAME

AFTER dinner, Peggy Allison seized Jean by the arm and insisted that they go up on the hill to see if the lists of basket-ball candidates were posted. Jean knew in her heart that her name would not be among them, for the one fast rule of Ashton was that no girl was considered eligible for athletic contests unless her work was satisfactory in every department. For a moment she wanted to refuse Peggy, but she felt she must know about her disappointment sooner or later, and she might as well tell her now. So they walked slowly over to the gym and Peggy found Jean very quiet.

“What’s the matter, Jean? What’s troubling you?”

“Nothing, except I’m awfully disgusted with myself and you will be, too, for you aren’t going to find my name among the basket-

ball candidates. I didn't pass in my French, so of course I can't play. I knew all along it was going to be a toss-up whether I'd get through or not, but I hoped that lately I'd done well enough to make up for my poor beginning. However, I've made up my mind to one thing, and that is if I can't try for the basket-ball team I'll do something here before I leave."

"That's the proper spirit, Jean. I'm awfully sorry about your French, but every one admits that Mlle. Franchant is the hardest marker in college and flunks more freshmen than all the other profs together. But there's tennis left for you in the spring and the big tournament in June. Why don't you try to take the championship away from Natalie?"

"Oh, I couldn't beat her, but I'll go into the tournament if my French is all right. I'll study it morning, noon, and night and I'll pass it, too, for I've made up my mind. I'm not going over to basket-ball practice any more. Not that I'm grouchy because I can't play, but I'm going to put that time into studying. I'll be the very greasiest grind you ever saw, with

a towel around my throbbing head as I burn the midnight oil night after night and drive my little room-mate to distraction. Speaking of Elizabeth, do you know, she's doing splendid work in oratory. In class last week she astonished every one. She gave that little poem 'Carcasson,' and when she had finished, Miss Moulton said, 'Excellent, Miss Fairfax, I'm going to ask you to give that to us again next week; it's something for us to anticipate.' And Elizabeth told me afterward that when class was dismissed that day 'Moultie' stopped her and congratulated her and told her she hoped she would enter prize speaking. Elizabeth said that she shouldn't think of such a thing, for in the first place she would never dare to get up in the chapel before every one, and in the second place she hadn't the time to put into it. But later on I'm going to try to persuade her to enter, and I think she will."

"I hope she will, Jean. Look at those girls around the bulletin board. We'll never get within a mile of it."

"Oh, yes, we will, Peg; wait a minute," and before they realized it both girls were

gazing at the long list of names. There were two Merton House girls among them, Anne Cockran for the freshmen, and Sallie Lawrence for the sophomores, and as Jean saw their names she hid her own disappointment by saying gayly, "Oh, isn't it splendid that there are two Merton girls? I hope they'll make the teams. Won't it be exciting to have the two rivals in the house before the game?"

"Oh, Jean, you'll find excitement enough before the game and after it, too, for from now on there'll be plenty of spirit between you freshies and the sophs. Be on the watch, for you never can tell what the sophs will do next. You must be particularly careful about your flags and the class banquet, for those are the really great tests of strength or weakness of the freshmen class. Who's your chairman of the flag committee?"

"Florence Cummings, over in North, and I'm fortunate or unfortunate enough, whichever you consider it, to be on the committee with four others. We haven't met yet, but I think there's a meeting next week."

"Well, it's a mighty hard committee to

serve on, and I don't envy you one bit. I hope you'll come out all right and win and float your flags, but make up your mind for some excitement." The two girls spent the rest of the afternoon walking over to Lookout Hill and the conversation changed from basketball and class rivalry to everything imaginable which could interest two such wide-awake college girls.

Classes settled down again after the excitement of midyear's, and if there were heartaches and bitter disappointments most of them were covered up with good resolutions and hard work. The girls who had failed and were obliged to return home were missed for a little and then forgotten. The seniors were realizing that it was their last half-year and were crowding as much as possible into it; the juniors seemed to be devoting themselves to social activities; and the lower classes were developing class spirit and two rival basketball teams.

It had been a custom from time immemorial at Ashton to have an annual basketball game between the freshmen and sophomores to de-

cide which class might carry its flags for the rest of the year at all college events. If the freshmen were defeated in the game they gave up their flags to the sophomores, and if the sophomores were defeated they gave their flags to the freshmen. For several days before the game, and especially the one immediately preceding, each class strove to have one of its flags in some conspicuous place where it could remain without being hauled down by the rival class. It always took carefully laid plans on the part of the freshmen, and great precaution in executing them to outwit the wily sophs, and few freshmen classes could boast among their victories the successful raising of their flag. Then after the basket-ball game, as soon as possible, the freshman class held a banquet, either to celebrate its victory or find consolation in its defeat. If the sophomores could prevent the banquet from taking place, all the more glory for them, and they watched and plotted and made life miserable for the anxious freshmen.

Classes come and classes go, but customs live on forever, and 1914 and 1915 were no ex-

ceptions to the rule and had made great preparations for the fray. Jean Cabot and the other members of the flag committee held secret meetings for days and days at Edith McAllister's house. When Edith came to Ashton, her mother, being the only other member of her family, had come with her and hired a small house in the shadow of the college where the two lived happily together. Mrs. McAllister had a sewing machine and could help the girls with their sewing. They had over a hundred and fifty small flags to make in order that every girl in the class might have one to carry to the game, besides several large ones to display in the gymnasium. The college color was blue, and 1915 had chosen white as its class color, so the numerals, 1915, were to be of white and sewed on the blue background. The flags were made of cheese-cloth and had to be cut out and hemmed and then the numerals were to be stitched on. Only a few of the girls knew how to run a sewing machine, so it took some time to get them done.

But at last they were finished and the next

thing was to know what to do with them, for if one of the sophs scented them out and captured them they were lost forever and the freshmen disgraced. Finally it was decided to lock them in a small trunk which belonged to Mrs. McAllister, and the trunk was to be placed in the attic and the door locked and the two keys put on a ribbon and worn round Mrs. McAllister's neck night and day. The one flag which the freshmen hoped to fly before the game was entrusted to the chairman, Florence Cummings, who sewed it on to her petticoat the day she carried it to her dormitory. All the other flags, however, were to remain in their hiding-place until the day of the game.

Each dormitory had girls from both classes to act as spies and watch all proceedings and report suspicious actions to a general committee. Jean was chosen from the freshman class in Merton and found her hands full. On the day before the game, very early in the morning, it was whispered around the Hill that the sophomore flag was flying in the middle of the "Pond," as the girls called the

small open reservoir, just back of the college buildings, which supplied a neighboring city with water. It did not take long for the rumors to be verified, and in a few moments nearly every girl in college had been to the "Pond" to see the small blue and orange flag floating in the water. There was much speculation as to how it could have been placed there, for the water, which was some ten feet below the surface of the ground, was held in by solid walls of masonry which seemed impossible to scale. But there was the flag, holding its head as high as any of the sophs who said nothing, but went about their recitations with a satisfied smile upon their faces which seemed to say, "You see our flag; well, get it if you can."

The freshmen said nothing, but one could see disappointment on every face. The flag committee held an animated session at Mrs. McAllister's and then started out to work. Not a sign of a freshman flag all day long and apparently there was to be no attempt to remove the sophomore one, for to the casual observer that seemed impossible. There was

not a boat nor a ladder, nor a rope anywhere in evidence around the "Pond," and the grumbly old watchman sat in his little box of a house at the northwest corner placidly smoking his pipe as though nothing had happened, all the while refusing to offer any suggestions to the numberless inquiries which poured in upon him. At nightfall the flag was still where it had been all day and the lofty sophs felt the victory was theirs, for the freshmen, to all appearances, had given up the attempt to capture it. There was tense excitement in all the dormitories during supper and the early hours of the evening, but it seemed to subside a little as bedtime approached.

As Elizabeth and Jean turned out their lights and crept into bed, Elizabeth said, "Isn't it a shame, Jean, to be defeated at the very outset? It looks bad for the game in spite of all belief in signs. They say the even-year classes never are lucky, you know. Aren't you tired after such a strenuous day? I for one will be glad when the suspense is all over and the game is won or lost. You'll be

worn to a thread if you do much more running around."

"Yes, I am tired, Beth; but it's worth while working for the class. Luck does seem against us now, but don't give up yet; there's plenty of time for things to happen. Good night," and Jean turned on her pillow as though to sleep.

Shortly after twelve o'clock, if one had been looking she might have seen girls hurrying from the different dormitories in the direction of Mrs. McAllister's house. On the small porch stood Edith and her mother ready to welcome the girls. "Come into the house and drink some hot coffee before we start, for it's bitter cold in spite of the fact that it's March. What time do you expect your man?"

The girls were so excited that they declared they did not want the coffee, but preferred to wait on the porch for the arrival of the automobile which was to bring Mr. Doherty, professional swimmer and diver.

"He promised to be here at quarter-past twelve," said Florence Cummings, "but I'm

sure it's that now. What if he shouldn't come after all, and spoil our plans? I wish I'd offered him more money, but he seemed perfectly satisfied with my proposition. I think I'd almost be tempted to jump in myself if he didn't come. I don't just like the idea of an ice-cold bath, but I could do the swim all right. Are the ladder and rope here? Joe said he would bring them down after ten."

"Yes," said Edith, "they're in the cellar with the lantern. Isn't it fortunate that there isn't a moon? It's dark as a pocket, so no one can see us. I can hear an automobile now. It must be the Hon. Mr. Doherty."

In a moment a small roadster drew up in front of the porch and a stalwart youth alighted and approached the group. Florence Cummings greeted him with, "Good evening, is this Mr. Doherty? It's so dark I can hardly see you, but I'm Miss Cummings who interviewed you this afternoon."

"Yes, Miss Cummings, it's me."

"I was beginning to fear you weren't coming. You see it's very important work you have to do for us to-night and I think

we'd better begin at once. Everything is ready and we will do exactly as you suggested this afternoon."

"Yes, mum. I'm sorry to be late, but me auto broke down jest after I was leavin' Boston and it took me some time to fix it, but I'm ready now."

And then the little procession started, Mr. Doherty carrying one end of the long ladder and two of the girls helping on the other end. The other girls followed in the rear with Mrs. McAllister to chaperon them. They took a long roundabout way to avoid crossing the campus, and all waited a moment at the foot of the hill while Jean hastened up to the "Pond" to see if by any chance some of the sophs were on guard. Not a trace could she find of a girl, so she ran back to the others who anxiously awaited her. Then they all, silently and cautiously, followed her up to the spot agreed upon for the work.

They had chosen the end of the reservoir farthest away from the college, and Mr. Doherty let down the long ladder until it reached the water. The heavy ropes which

were tied securely around the ends of the ladder he trailed along the ground and tied firmly around the base of a tree which stood near by. Then taking off his overcoat and suit of clothes which covered his woolen bathing suit, he crept down the ladder and silently dropped into the water and swam toward the center of the reservoir. It took him some time to locate the little flag and loose it from its anchor, but finally it was done and he swam back and climbed the ladder and dropped the flag into Florence Cummings' lap. Then he drew up the ladder, untied the ropes, wrapped his fur coat around him and they hurried back to Mrs. McAllister's where the swimmer took a hot bath and a rub-down and drank what seemed to the girls gallons of coffee. Then he jumped into his automobile and was off to the city.

It took the girls several moments to realize that what they had been working for so hard really had been accomplished and the coveted sophomore flag was here in their possession.

"Now what shall we do with it?" said Florence Cummings.

"I think the best place for it is in the trunk with the others," said Jean, and the rest agreed. Thereupon Mrs. McAllister removed the keys from her neck and Edith and Florence took two candles and went up to the attic and placed the flag with the others, after which they came downstairs for the last consultation of the flag committee. Although they had captured the sophomore flag they had not yet displayed their own, and to be effective it must be in evidence on the following morning and there remained but a few hours before sunrise. It was finally decided to fly it from the top of one of the dormitories. It would look like a tiny speck at such a height, but it would be beyond the reach of the enemy if carefully guarded until noon, when hostilities were to stop until the game itself. To make everything fair, lots were to be drawn and the girl drawing the piece of paper marked "3" was to have the honor of flying the flag from her dormitory. Mrs. McAllister cut the pieces of paper and marked them and then held them out to the girls. "Come, draw quickly, girls," and she

approached Jean, who stood nearest her. Without hesitation Jean drew the paper nearest her and after one look waved the tiny white paper over her head, crying, "The die is cast! That flag shall fly from Merton or I'll die in the attempt. Come, fellow-conspirators, let us away that I may begin this bloody business," and the girls started back to the dormitories, Mrs. McAllister and Edith accompanying each one to the doors of the dormitories, where accomplices from within awaited their arrival.

Anne Cockran had been chosen to guard Merton and she fairly pulled Jean into the reading-room to hear about the night's adventure. "No, not to-night, Anne, we've too much to do; we got the flag all right but now you've got to help me fly our flag from Merton. Don't ask me any questions, just do as I say and I'll tell you the rest in the morning. Get some sweaters and heavy coats and meet me at the roof-stairway as soon as you can."

Each girl went silently to her room and collected as much heavy clothing as she could

find and met as agreed upon at the stairway on the fifth floor which led to the flat roof above. "Now," said Jean, "I mean to go up on the roof and nail this flag to this flag-stick and tie it to the front projection of the roof where it can be seen by every one on the Row. After I have fastened it securely I shall come down to the stairs and lock the door with the key inside. I shall put these pillows and sweaters and coats on the stairs and make myself as comfortable as possible and stay there until twelve o'clock, so that our flag may be safe. When I want a little air I can go up on the roof or just keep the door open a bit. I've got plenty of crackers, so I won't starve. It's lucky to-morrow is a holiday, for I won't be cutting and no one can say I am breaking rules. It's only a few hours now till breakfast, so I must get a little sleep and you, too, Anne, or you'll be in no condition for the game. I'm all right; don't worry about me; 1915 will fly its flag, even if we are beaten at the game. We've broken one tradition and perhaps we can the others," and Jean shut the little door, locked

it and went up on the roof to execute her plans.

She had a little electric light which she flashed every now and then to guide her over the flat pebbly roof until she found the corner projection. She nailed the flag to the flag-stick and tied it securely to the iron cornice. Her fingers seemed almost frozen when she finished, but her heart beat wildly as she thought that for the first time she was really doing something worth while for 1915. If she couldn't play basket-ball she could do this much, which was a victory, too, though in a smaller way. She got back to the stairway and settled down on her improvised couch, but, try as she might, sleep would not come. It seemed ages to her before the breakfast bell rang and then to satisfy her nervous hunger she munched some hard, dry crackers. She knew now that in a few moments the loss of the sophomore flag would be discovered and the freshman flag flying from Merton would enrage every Ashton sophomore and bring joy to the hearts of the freshmen.

Suddenly, it seemed to grow close on the

stairs and Jean opened the upper door and breathed in the cool morning air which refreshed her. One look at the flag assured her that it was safe and still waved proudly in the breeze. She gazed out over the college and admitted to herself that she was beginning to love it all, and was so glad that she was a part of it, even though only a very small, insignificant part. With the fresh air and renewed courage she went back to the stairs and waited. She heard the girls go up and down the corridors and she longed to ask them about the flag, but remained perfectly quiet.

Presently she heard the sound of whispers and stealthy footsteps outside the door and then some one tried the knob. They evidently expected to find the door locked, for they shook and twisted the knob and rattled the door as if they meant to do business. She heard one girl say, "It's no use; the key's in the lock and we can do nothing unless we break the lock. Now's our only chance while the freshies are at mass meeting. Couldn't we get some tools somewhere? What do

burglars generally use, anyway, when they break open locks?"

"I don't know," some one answered, "but couldn't we get something sharp and a screw-driver and then unfasten the screws and take off the lock on this side and push the handle through, then perhaps we could push the key out and pry open the lock. Let's go down into the basement and see if we can beg, borrow, or steal some tools from Joe. We'll tell him we want to fix our trunks. We must hurry, though, for those freshies will be back here soon and on guard again," and they hurried down the corridor.

Jean had listened to their plans with increasing fright. Suppose they did break open the lock, what could she do then? They did not suspect that she was there, and probably thought it would be smooth sailing if they could but open the door. She went up on the roof to see if by any chance she could find something to brace the door but all that presented themselves to her eyes were two brooms which some careless girl had left on the roof after sweeping her rugs, and an iron

shovel which had probably been used last to shovel a path through the snow so that the maids could do their sweeping. Jean seized all three implements of warfare and hurried back again to the stairs and braced the shovel and then the brooms against the door. She knew the brooms would not do much good but she had more faith in the shovel. If the sophs were determined to get in at any costs, she would give them a hard struggle.

Before long the sophomores returned and in addition to the tools, she felt sure they had brought more girls to help out. There was a scraping of a file and the turning of the screw-driver and Jean knew they were working as hard and as fast as they could. She wondered how near twelve o'clock it could be and if the mass meeting would ever be over. If they would only hurry, for in a few moments it might be too late! From the conversation outside the door the girls seemed confident that they would succeed, and were glorying in their luck. Just then Jean heard many footsteps on the stairs and a shout and as she listened she heard a tremendous shout

of, "Rah, Rah, Rah, Freshmen; Rah, Rah, Rah, 1915; Rah, Rah, Rah, Jean Cabot; Rah, Rah, Rah, the flag," and she recognized Elsie Gleason's voice saying, "Unlock the door, Jean; it's twelve o'clock and we've won! We've come to thank you for what you've done. Come out where we can see you." When Jean opened the door she saw the hallway and the stairs filled with the freshmen, who sent up cheer after cheer for what she had done, but there was not a trace of a sophomore except the tools which they had dropped in their hasty flight.

All Jean could say was, "Thank you, girls. I've only done what all of you would have done if you'd had the opportunity. I must go down now and get ready for the game, and I'm hungry, too. Is lunch ready?"

Then the long procession turned and led Jean to her room, where it gave one mighty last cheer and then dispersed, and Jean closed the door upon them and sank down upon her couch and cried for real joy.

CHAPTER XIII

THE GAME

THE game was scheduled to begin at three o'clock, but long before that hour the great gymnasium was crowded with enthusiastic supporters of the rival teams. The sophomores and seniors with their friends filled the right side of the balcony, while the freshmen and juniors with their friends were at the left. At one end of the floor was erected a platform for the faculty, while on narrow benches on either side of the floor the teams and officials were to sit. The gymnasium had been gayly decorated with the blue and white of 1915 and the blue and orange of 1914; and huge banners were hung from the iron railing of the balcony.

As Jean was on the flag committee she stood at the door and helped distribute flags to the freshmen. At last every one had been given out, and she hurried to her seat. Elizabeth

and she were both fortunate enough to draw seats in the front row, not side by side, but only separated by two other freshmen, Mary Boyce and Ruth Witham. As she crowded her way down through the masses of girls she was stopped again and again to be congratulated by those who had just heard of what she had done.

"Why, Jean, who would have thought it of you?" said Peggy Allison as Jean pushed by her. "It's lots better than making the team. Come down to the Inn with me after the game. I want you to meet my cousin, Miss Murray, from Radcliffe. I'm giving just a little supper for her, and it will be grand to have such a heroine as you with us."

"Oh, nonsense, Peggy! I wish you wouldn't talk about it; it's nothing, but I shall be awfully glad to go down to the Inn with you. I'm starving already. You might introduce me to your cousin, though, instead of taking it for granted that we know each other."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Jean, but I'm so excited over what you've done that I have for-

gotten everything else. Allow me to introduce you to my cousin, Miss Janet Murray, Radcliffe 1914. Miss Murray, allow me to introduce you to Miss Jean Cabot, Ashton 1915. There, is that perfectly proper, Jean? Don't forget to meet us after the game."

"All right," said Jean, "and I'm very glad to have met you, Miss Murray," and she finally reached her seat. No sooner had she sat down than the class cheer leader arose and said, "Ready, girls; three long cheers for Jean Cabot," and the gym resounded with the three long raahs with Cabot at the end. Jean blushed a little and then began to look about her, apparently unconscious of the sensation her appearance had created. She thought she had never before seen anything as exciting as the scene the gym presented now. There were rows upon rows of girls with their bright-colored flags and streamers, their faces aglow with excitement. Most of them were sitting down, but those not fortunate enough to secure seats stood in the back rows and leaned this way and that for a better view. It did not make much difference as long as

they were there. Down among the faculty there seemed to be as much enthusiasm as in the balcony, only in a more subdued manner. Jean looked at Miss Hooper to see if she wore the white carnations she had sent to her that morning, and smiled to herself as she saw her holding them in her hands and waving them every little while as she recognized a freshman or upper-class girl in the balcony. Miss Emerson had many carnations and daffodils, too, the flower that the sophomores decided best matched their class color, and she noticed that almost all the faculty wore or carried some flowers or ribbons to show their preferences.

"Oh, Mary, isn't it wonderful?" said Jean, as she seized Mary Boyce's hand, "and to think I might perhaps have played with them if I had only studied harder. You better believe I'll study harder next—" but she stopped, for the door of the dressing-room opened and the girls ran out upon the floor.

"Why, Jean," said Ruth Witham, "what dandy suits the girls have. Are they new?"

"Yes," said Jean, "it's a surprise. The

girls made them all themselves. Doesn't Anne Cockran look too sweet for anything? Isn't she little? But she surely can make baskets if she ever gets half a chance."

Just then the freshmen broke into a round of cheers for the team and every member on it, and in turn the sophomores gave their cheers. The two teams practised a few minutes at both goals and promptly at three o'clock Miss Matthews blew her whistle and the girls lined up ready for play.

"Ready, sophs?" and Sallie Lawrence replied, "All ready."

"Ready, freshmen?" and Bess Johnson replied, "All ready."

The ball was tossed into the air, the whistle blown and the game was on. "Good," said Jean; "they're off; keep your eye on Bess Johnson. Isn't she tall? She ought to be able to put the ball right into the basket by just reaching up her hands," and as she said this, Bess Johnson, the freshman captain, with her superior reach touched the ball first and sent it spinning toward the sophomore goal. Anne Cockran, freshman forward,

rushed in pursuit of the ball, but missed it and a sophomore guard captured it and passing it quickly to the center who, eluding her long-armed opponent, continued its course toward the freshman goal by sending it into the arms of a waiting forward. Before she could be covered, she tossed it up to the basket where for a moment it poised upon the edge and then rolled in. A goal in less than two minutes of play!

A deafening shout arose from the sophs, and not to be outdone the freshmen followed suit, although Jean declared to the girls around her that she didn't see anything to cheer for. "To keep up their courage," said Elizabeth. "Don't be discouraged, Jean; they've only begun playing."

"That's all right, Beth, but I'm superstitious about some things, and I firmly believe that the side which gets the first basket always wins the game."

"Who told you that?" asked Ruth Witham.

"Nobody," replied Jean, "but I believe it, and you see how it works out to-night."

Although the sophomores had got a basket so easily during the first minutes, it was not so easy getting another. The freshmen did not intend to allow them to continue gaining points, and settled down to good steady playing. Both sides were pretty evenly matched, and their passing and guarding were excellent. The sophomore team was a little heavier than the freshman one, and perhaps lacked a little of the agility of the lighter girls. The ball went back and forth over the floor with an occasional attempt at a basket, until suddenly Anne Cockran got the ball in her possession and turning quickly to measure the distance to the basket, slipped and fell to the floor and for a moment lay there perfectly still. "Time!" shouted Bess Johnson, the freshman captain, and Miss Matthews blew her whistle. After the college doctor examined Anne carefully he found that she had twisted her ankle, and of course could not play the rest of the game. Very reluctantly Anne left the floor amid a deafening cheer, and if one had been in the gallery she might have heard many a freshman murmur to her neighbor, "Oh, isn't it a shame!

And she's our best player. We've lost now, surely."

After the doctor had bound up Anne's ankle and wrapped her in a big bath-robe, he carried her out to the players' bench, where she was to watch the rest of the game, even if it broke her heart not to be out on the floor playing. Bess Johnson called for "Phil" Woodworth to take Anne's place, and the game was on again.

Quickly the ball was put into play and there was such rapid passing and clever blocking on the part of each team that one seemed to have little advantage over the other. The playing grew more furious, and several times the referee had to interfere in order to put the ball back into play. Finally, in one of these scrimmages almost under the sophomore goal, the ball rolled out from under the feet of two struggling contestants straight toward Phil Woodworth. Unguarded for the moment, she sprang quickly forward, seized the ball and, in her slow, hesitant manner aimed at the basket. The ball dropped into the basket, but not a second too soon, for at that

very moment the timer's whistle blew for the end of the first half. There was a tense silence for a moment, followed by tumultuous cheers by the freshmen as they realized that the work of the substitute had tied the score.

"Oh, I'm so excited I can't sit here another second!" said Jean. "Let's stand up a little while; my foot's asleep, I've kept it so long in one position. I'd like to walk a little, but there's such a crowd I never can get through it."

"Better not try, Jean," said Ruth, "there isn't time, anyway, and it's fine to watch the crowd. Wasn't that splendid for Phil Woodworth? After all, it does count to be a substitute. Her room-mate, Grace Littlefield, told me just to-day that when the regular team was chosen and Phil didn't make it she was so disappointed that she declared she'd never play basket-ball again, and it took a lot of coaxing on the part of the girls to get her to promise she'd be sub. Why, I'd give everything I possess in the world to be down there playing, even as one of the subs! Poor Anne! How do you suppose she feels?"

"Pretty sore, Ruth, and of course awfully disappointed, but she'll get her numerals all right, won't she? She certainly deserves them," said Mary Boyce.

"Oh, girls, look!" said Jean. "There's Miss Emerson and Miss Thurston going over to speak to Anne. My! isn't that an honor! Think of Miss Thurston condescending to console an insignificant freshman! Actually, she is the coldest, most unsympathetic individual I ever ran up against."

"Yes," said Elizabeth, "and she's just in the act of giving her some flowers one of her fond admirers sent her, and Miss Emerson is sharing her carnations, too. Doesn't she look dear in that new gray dress? I think she's the sweetest college president that ever lived, and I wish I could do something to have her give me even one little carnation, to say nothing of a whole bunch of them. Doesn't a game like this just make you want to do things for old Ashton? I'll be a loyal supporter even if I can do nothing more."

"Oh, you'll do something, my fair Elizabeth," said Jean, "and before very long, too."

How much more time is there? I wish they'd begin. I want somebody to do something. I hate a tie score."

"Here come the girls," said Mary, as the girls took their positions and the whistle sounded; "now for some good fast playing."

With the changing of the goals, the tactics of the sophomore team seemed to change, and their superior weight and greater experience began to break down the freshman defense. They had quickly scored two goals to the freshmen's one and added another point, when an excited freshman, through too strenuous holding, committed a foul.

"Why don't they play more carefully?" said Jean. "They're just throwing the game away." And as if to add strength to her remark, the referee at that moment declared another foul and another point was added to the sophomore total. "Oh, I don't want to see the rest of the game," wailed Jean. "I can't see the sophs beat us so badly. Why can't our girls do something?"

At the toss-off which followed, Bess Johnson gave a signal with her left hand and in-

stead of sending the ball towards the sophomore goal she tossed it back into the hands of one of the guards, who, in obedience to the signal, had rushed forward. Catching the ball before it had touched the floor, she threw it accurately to a waiting forward who, before the bewildered sophomores had recovered from this unusual strategy, threw the ball into the basket. The score was now 8-4 in favor of the sophs. Encouraged by the success of this play, the freshmen redoubled their efforts, but to little purpose, as they were already beginning to show the effects of their strenuous play, so that except for one point added to their score by a sophomore foul they could do little more than successfully defend their goal.

The game was rapidly drawing to a close when the ball going out of bounds was awarded to Bess Johnson to throw in. Closely guarded by the waving arms of her opponent, she glanced quickly over the floor and at that moment saw the agile form of Louise Harrison as, eluding her opponent, she rushed down with arms outstretched to

catch the ball. With quick movement she threw it over the shoulder of her antagonist toward the rapidly moving figure, who, though going at full speed, caught it fairly. But she had not a moment to consider passing it to another nearer the goal, as two sophs rushed towards her. The basket seemed very far away indeed, but with quick concentration and taut muscles she threw with all her might. It seemed an interminable moment as the ball soared through the air, but at last with a little spiral drop it settled into the waiting net.

Time was up, and the sophomores had won, but by the scantest of margins, the final score being 8-7 in their favor. It took a moment or two for the freshmen to recover from their defeat, and then they cheered as lustily for the sophs as though it had been their own victory. Then there was a wild rush for the gymnasium floor and the balcony was emptied of all its occupants. The sophs formed a procession, and some of the strongest girls carried their captain, Sallie Lawrence, off the



WITH A QUICK MOVEMENT SHE THREW IT OVER THE SHOULDER OF
HER ANTAGONIST.—Page 258.

floor amid shouts and cheers, and the freshmen, not to be outdone, seized Bess Johnson and followed suit.

When the teams came out of the dressing-rooms again the sophs sent up a mighty shout. "The freshman flags, the freshman flags, we want the freshman flags!" As they shouted, each girl seized the hand of the one nearest her and they formed a circle round the gymnasium. When they dissolved the circle some of the cheer-leaders erected from convenient apparatus what most closely resembled a funeral pile in the center of the floor, and then called for the freshmen to form a line. Sallie Lawrence hastened to the piano and struck up the Funeral March and the freshmen slowly approached the pile and each girl dropped her flag and passed on out of the building.

"Well, I don't care a bit," said Jean to an animated group of freshmen outside the gymnasium. "If they did win it was only by one point, and our girls really did some wonderful playing. Why, that shot of Bess

Johnson's was worth the whole game. Isn't she a star?" Then looking around her she whispered, "Now to get ready for our banquet; if we can only succeed in that we won't mind losing the game."

CHAPTER XIV

THE BANQUET

THE freshman banquet was always held as soon after the game as possible in the hotel of some neighboring town, easy of access but out of the reach of the sophs. It took a great deal of clever planning to escape their vigilant watch, and many a time freshman classes never succeeded in gathering at this festive occasion, but 1915 was a very energetic class and determined at any cost to outwit their rivals. They agreed among themselves that the banquet should be held the following Monday evening at Langley Inn, Southtown, about twelve miles from Ashton, and the girls were to assemble there before six o'clock. No two girls were to be seen leaving the Hill at the same time, and they could take the train, the electric cars or walk to nearby towns and leave from there. Miss Hooper and Miss Moulton

of the faculty were to chaperon them and bring them back to college when the celebration was over.

A little after six o'clock on the evening agreed upon, Lois Underwood, chairman of the banquet committee, walked through the reception-rooms of the Langley Inn to assemble the girls into the dining-room. "Are we all here, girls? I'll call the roll first and let every girl reply, 'Here,' as her name is called." It did not take long to discover that Bess Johnson, basket-ball captain and star of the recent game, Edith McCausland, class president, and Jean Cabot, heroine of the flag-raising, were the only ones missing. "Who knows anything about these girls?" asked Lois, anxiously. Instead of an individual answer, there was a universal shout of "The sophs! They've captured them."

"Well," said Lois, "perhaps we had better wait a few moments before we begin to eat, for they may only have been delayed. If any thing has happened to them we shall be terribly disappointed, but as so many of us are here

we will carry out our original plans, and hope for the best about the missing ones."

Just then one of the maids entered the reception-room. "Is Miss Lois Underwood here? She is wanted at the telephone in the office."

"Oh, probably it's from one of the girls. I'll be right back in a minute and tell you what has happened."

But when she returned, her face did not look as though she were pleased with the message she had received. "It was Jean Cabot telephoning, but all she said was, 'I sha'n't be at the banquet to-night.' Probably one of those horrid sophs has her imprisoned, and made her telephone that without any explanation, so it would be all the harder to bear."

"Are you sure it was Jean talking?" asked Elizabeth Fairfax. "Perhaps a soph did it to deceive us."

"No; I recognized Jean's voice all right, in spite of the tone of anger. I call it mighty hard luck, for Jean was to reply to the toast, 'How I Raised the 1915 Flag.' Of course it's an old story with most of you now, but none

of us will ever get tired of hearing Jean tell it in that inimitable style of hers."

Again a maid summoned Lois to the telephone, and she returned again with a downcast face. "It's Edith McCausland this time and all she said was, 'Don't expect me at the banquet to-night,' and before I could ask her the reason she had hung up the receiver."

"And are you sure it was Edith talking this time?" asked another doubting freshman.

"Yes, quite sure, for no one could mistake her deep-toned voice. Another of our speech-makers gone. Well, all I've got to say is that some of the rest of you will have to speak impromptu, for we must have toasts even if the sophs have stolen our famous after-dinner speakers."

As the maid appeared smiling a third time at the door Lois said, "You needn't tell me I'm wanted at the telephone again, for I know it's Bess Johnson this time to give me the same old message. I'm not going to answer, for it's only giving more satisfaction to the sophs, and they can keep ringing all night if they want to, but I'll not answer them. Tell them

Miss Underwood is too busy to answer the telephone. Come, girls, let us go into the dining-room. Take any seat you wish; we won't try to find our place cards, for we haven't any. Let's sing our class song as we march in. Nell Butler, will you please go to the piano and play for us?"

Obliging Nell, who always was called upon to furnish music at all the freshman doings, hurried to the piano and struck the opening chords of the class song, and then the girls broke into song and marched double-file into the long dining-room. There were two large tables and one smaller one intended for the speakers and guests of honor. Lois showed Miss Hooper and Miss Moulton to their seats and then called out, "Anne Cockran, Phil Woodworth, Mary Williamson, Stell Leavitt, Clara Hawkins, Vera Montgomery, Gertrude Hollis, this way, please," and when they sat down there were still the three empty seats which were to have been occupied by the missing girls. "We want these seats filled, too," said Lois. "Betty Horton, you come over here, for you'll have to sing for us; and, Flor-

ence Cummings, here's a seat for you; prepare to tell us how you made the glorious 1915 flags we've lost forever; and, Eleanor Whitcomb, join the other celebrities; because of your sophomore room-mate you can talk on, 'What I Know about the Sophomores, after Rooming with One for Seven Months.' There, that looks better to have the table full. Ladies, be seated," and at the signal every girl sat down and seizing her knife rapped three times on the table with it, as they sang out, "Rah, rah, rah; rah, rah, rah; rah, rah, rah, the freshmen."

Then they began to eat, and quantities of good things rapidly disappeared. One would almost have wondered how they could eat so much, for it sounded as though each girl was keeping up a continual conversation with her neighbor, and every one admits it is somewhat difficult to eat and talk at the same time, but a college girl can do almost everything and perhaps did not find this difficult. Anyway, they continued to eat until about eight o'clock and then Lois called on Miss Hooper to respond to the toast, "The Freshman as Seen

by the Faculty." Miss Hooper, in spite of her predilection for mathematics, had a keen sense of humor and kept the girls in gales of laughter as she summoned up the funny mistakes of freshmen she had known, without making her remarks at all personal. The girls clapped and clapped when she finished, and many a one was glad to see this side of their mathematics instructor which was entirely lacking in class-room.

"Now," said Lois, "we'll hear from Anne Cockran on 'How I Enjoy Being an Invalid.'"

Anne couldn't stand up, and so leaned against her chair and very briefly but brightly gave her views of the game after she had been obliged to sit on the benches and watch the others. One girl after another was called upon and all sounded the praises of 1915 and told what it had to be thankful for, even if the game had been lost. They sang between the speeches, and with so much cheering and singing many began to get hoarse. Just after Eleanor Whitcomb had sent the girls into gales of laughter over her humorous description of the sophs as judged by her room-mate,

the door from the hallway opened to admit the proprietor, who ushered in Mlle. Franchant and the three missing freshmen. Instantly every girl arose and cheered and cheered in spite of tired throats. Room was made at the center table and the four late arrivals were given the places of honor.

"Everything's eaten," said Lois Underwood, "except what you see on the tables, but help yourselves freely to that. Only don't eat too long, for we're crazy to hear what happened to you and how you succeeded in finally getting here. Elizabeth Johnson, you're next on the programme; please give us an account of yourself."

Bess arose and slipped off her long black cloak, revealing a somewhat soiled and torn shirt-waist. "You see, girls, I'm not dressed just exactly right for a banquet, but take me as you find me and you'll understand everything when I've finished.

"We're here at last, although we never expected to be and it's been rather difficult getting here. Some way or other the sophs found out that we were to have the banquet to-night

and they suspected we three girls would speak. They evidently decided it was too late to break up the banquet entirely, but the next best thing seemed to be to kidnap us and keep us locked up until it was too late to think of leaving the Hill. I left Wellington about three o'clock and walked down back of the dormitory, intending to take the electrics over at Canton Corners for Boston and then take the train at the South Station.

“Before I had gone very far Elsie Ather-ton overtook me and asked me where I was going. Not daring to say ‘in town,’ I told her I was going for a little walk, for I hoped she would leave me at the Corners, and then I could walk farther down the street to take the car. But she replied that she was out walking, too, and suggested that I go down to her aunt’s on Oliver Street for a few moments, as she had an errand to do there. I knew I had several hours ahead of me and that it would be less suspicious if I went with her than if I refused and boarded a car. I consented, and we soon reached her aunt’s house. A maid let us in and said that Mrs.

Wolcott was upstairs and wished us to go to her room. I followed Elsie up the stairs and we entered what I supposed was Mrs. Wolcott's room. Instead of meeting Mrs. Wolcott, a masked figure approached me and before I could realize what was happening I was seized by several other masked figures and blindfolded. Then I was commanded to sit down and my hands and feet were bound securely to the chair. Some one whispered in my ear, 'Now get to Langley Inn if you can,' and they left the room and locked the door behind them.

"How long I sat there I do not know, but I twisted and turned and tried every way to free myself, but it was no use. In course of time the door was unlocked and some one else was brought in and bound to a chair as I had been, and I heard again the whisper, 'Now get to Langley Inn in time for your banquet if you can.' And then the door was locked. It did not take me long to discover that my companion in misery was Jean Cabot, and we were comparing our experiences and trying to plan our escape when the door opened again

and a third victim was brought in, securely fastened as we had been, and given the same suggestion that had been given to us.

“For the third time the door was closed and locked and we were left to darkness and ourselves. It took only a moment to discover that the new arrival was Edith McCausland, but before she could tell us of her experiences we heard the key in the lock and we waited for the fourth victim. The electric light was turned on and we heard one of the girls, who we afterward decided was Sallie Lawrence, take down the telephone receiver and call up ‘The Langley Inn.’ When the line was connected we were each forced to say that we would not be at the banquet. No one answered my call, so I concluded Lois had begun to suspect foul play and would have nothing more to do with it. After the telephoning was over we were warned not to try to escape, for it would be impossible, and if we were quiet and submissive we would be released before ten o’clock. We said nothing and were soon left to ourselves again.

“We decided to make every effort to free

ourselves, and after much straining and striving, Edith McCausland got one hand free. She had her old clothes on and in her shirt-waist pocket was a penknife which she had used that afternoon in the lab. With this she finally managed to cut the ropes from her other hand and then from her feet and she was free. Although it was pitch dark she succeeded in freeing Jean and me, and we breathed freely again and felt that half the battle was won. We did not dare to turn on the lights for fear the girls would see us, for we suspected they might be somewhere within sight of the room or perhaps in the very house itself. We groped around until we found the windows and as quietly as possible opened them. Jean discovered that the window she had opened was not far above the ground, and better still, had a stout trellis which reached to the very sill. She decided to try to crawl down it, for even if it would not hold her weight the distance to fall would not be very great and she was willing to risk it. Once out of the house the way would be clear.

“Very slowly and cautiously she stepped

down upon the trellis, which proved perfectly capable of holding her weight, and in a moment she was on the ground. We followed suit, and in my haste to be out I forgot to close the window and I'm wondering now if the cold air from the window has chilled the whole house. Anyway, I didn't go back to close it. We crept back of the house without saying a word and walked fully five minutes before we stopped to get our bearings and hold a consultation. Edith knew where we were and told us that a short cut would take us up back of Faculty Row. If we could only get one of the faculty to chaperon us we could telephone for an automobile and get out to the banquet before it was too late. We knew Miss Hooper and Miss Moulton were out here, so we determined to ask Mlle. Franchant to go with us, knowing her fondness for the freshmen. We stumbled through backyards and over fences and finally reached Mlle. Franchant's house. We told her our story and persuaded her to chaperon us out here. We telephoned for an automobile and here we are at last, a little the worse for wear, perhaps, but loyal

members of 1915," and she sat down amid vigorous clapping and shouts of "Bravo!"

Lois then called upon Edith McCausland to tell the story of her capture.

"My story is very similar to Elizabeth's," she said, "except the first part. I had an afternoon lecture and when I came out of College Hall and was on my way to West, Helen Humphrey overtook me and asked me if I would like a short automobile ride. You know she rooms next to me and we've always been very good friends. Her aunt had offered her machine to her that afternoon and it would be at West in about fifteen minutes. I pleaded an engagement, but she urged so hard I thought I might go for an hour or so and then take a late train in town. After we had ridden until it was almost dark, Helen suggested that we stop for a moment at her aunt's house. I was on pins and needles, for I knew I must hurry or I'd never make the train. Still, it seemed the only polite thing to stop a moment and thank her aunt for the ride.

"When we rang the bell we were admitted by a maid, who sent us upstairs. The rest of

the story you know, for Bess has told you. It's been the most exciting experience I've ever had, but now that we're here and have fooled those horrid sophs, I don't mind the rest. But there's one consolation, girls, we'll be sophs ourselves next year and we ought to take all this in the right spirit, as no real harm has been done by our enemies," and Edith sat down as though she were very, very tired. The girls were impartial in their applause and gave Edith her full share and then Jean was called upon for her story.

"I had planned," she began, "to leave Merton very early after dinner and spend the afternoon in town with my cousin at the hospital where she is training. After I had dressed and was just about to start, Gertrude Vinton came in to talk a little while, and when she discovered where I was going she decided to go in town with me, for, strange to relate, she has a friend training at the Massachusetts General, too, who knows Cousin Nan very well. She suggested that we visit the girls and then have lunch up town and go back to Ashton together. I tried to think of various excuses,

but couldn't persuade her to change her mind. So there was nothing to do but for us to go in town together, and I made up my mind that I could lose her after we reached the hospital.

"But she stuck to me closer than a brother and insisted that we see both girls at the same time if possible. When we arrived at the hospital we found her friend was on duty, so we both had one hour with Nan. We would have stayed longer, but Nan was obliged to report at four o'clock for ward work. Just as we were discussing where to go for lunch, Gertrude began to feel sick and declared she should faint if she couldn't lie down immediately. Nan took us into one of the little waiting-rooms and brought water and restoratives to revive her, and although she did not faint she declared she was in great pain and must get back to college as quickly as possible. She said she was subject to terrible attacks of indigestion, so she wanted to be in her own room in East rather than in a hospital in town. Nothing would do but I must go out to college with her. On the train she said almost

nothing, but curled up in the seat as though she were suffering intensely. I pitied her and tried to make her as comfortable as possible, although inwardly I was raging because I was not on my way to our banquet.

“When we reached the station, Gertrude said she felt better and thought she could walk to East if we went slowly, and I helped her. Strange to relate, we met no one on the Row or in the dormitory. Gertrude rooms alone on the first floor, and so we were soon in her room. She lay down on her couch a few moments and then asked me if I would go down to the other end of the corridor and ask Ethel Fullman to come in and help her. Of course Ethel Fullman is a soph, but not a particle of suspicion entered my innocent little head and I walked into her room as big as life to tell her how sick Gertrude was and how much she wanted her to go up to her room to help her. As I entered her room I found myself in the midst of five sophs and before I could tell my story they had seized me and blindfolded me and covered my mouth so I could make no outcry. I tried my best to break away, but

they were too many for me, and I soon gave it up as useless. Some one put a long cloak over me and I was led for what seemed miles and miles. Finally we stopped, and were admitted to the house which the other girls have described to you. There's no need of my saying more, except that I think Mlle. Franchant was a jewel to come out here with us, and I move that we all rise and show her how much we appreciate what she has done."

Every girl jumped to her feet and the walls echoed and reëchoed with the cheers for the popular French instructor. After the speeches of the three heroines of the evening other speeches seemed out of the question and Lois suggested that the rest of the time be devoted to dancing and singing. At ten o'clock they left the hotel and took the train for Boston, and, after crossing the city they boarded the last train for Ashton.

It was a very quiet lot of freshmen that crossed the campus and entered the various dormitories, for they were very tired, but they felt a certain exaltation. Although they had been defeated in the basket-ball game, they felt

that they had shown their superiority over the sophs in the other two events. When Jean and Elizabeth finally reached their room, Elizabeth said, "You must be dead tired, Jean, with all you've been through. I can hardly move, myself, and I've done nothing all these exciting days but just look on. What a heroine you are, Jean. You're getting to be one of the most popular girls in 1915."

"Not at all, Elizabeth, and if I were, perhaps it's not the only kind of popularity I want. 'Some men are born great, others achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em.' You know the quotation; well, perhaps it's true in my case."

"Which one, Jean?"

"Oh, there ought not to be a question in your mind. Good night. Please don't waken me in the morning. I'm going to take one of my seven remaining cuts," and she went to sleep with her head full of banquets and kidnappings and flag-raising and basket-ball games.

CHAPTER XV

MR. CABOT'S VISIT

ALL college days are not as exciting and as full of the unusual as those centering around the freshman-sophomore basket-ball game. It took but a little while to settle down to the regular routine of recitations and hard study. This was the time to do the best work of the year, for June was not far off, and that meant hot nights and hotter days when studying, except for an occasional examination, seemed out of the question. This does not mean that the girls did nothing else but study during the spring term, but it was what they concentrated most of their energy upon.

Jean was studying hard, particularly upon her French, for she had not forgotten her promise to Richard Fairfax and to herself. Some days it was harder than others, and she

wondered if, after all, it was worth while if her college education was to end in June. On one of these days when the morrow's assignments seemed harder than usual and she was just a little discouraged about ever getting them, she decided to go down to the post office for the afternoon mail which came in at four o'clock, not that she expected a letter particularly, but she needed the exercise and change of air. There were plenty of girls she might have asked to accompany her, but to-day she wanted to be alone. She apparently was not in much of a hurry, for she went out of her way and circled around the laboratories before starting in the direction of the post office.

Leisurely she entered the office and gazed into her box and there indeed was a letter. But when she found it was from her father that changed matters entirely. She could not wait until she reached home to read it, but she sat right down in the office on the edge of the window sill and tore open the envelope and began reading the letter. It was very brief, but told her that unexpected business called him to the East and he was starting as soon

as possible and would wire her when he reached Boston. Her joy knew no bounds; her father actually coming to see her and perhaps already on his way. Oh, how glad she would be to see him, and then she said aloud, "He will take me back home with him; I can't stay here and see him go back alone. Two months more here aren't worth it. I shall miss the girls and the good times and Tom's graduation, but they're nothing in comparison with father and California and the boys. Yes; I shall persuade him to take me back. I know I can do it. He can't refuse me when he sees how badly I want to go," and she hurried back to Merton to tell Elizabeth and the others the good news.

As she ran up the corridor to her room, she saw Miss Hooper just turning away from the door. "Oh," gasped Jean, "isn't Elizabeth at home? I left her in the room when I went down for the mail. I'm sorry neither of us were here to receive you. Won't you come in now with me?"

"Yes, Miss Cabot, I shall be delighted to, for although I came to see you both I wanted

particularly to talk with you. Perhaps Miss Fairfax will return before long."

Jean opened the door and led her to the most comfortable chair by the window. The conversation was general for a while and then Jean could not keep her secret any longer. "Oh, Miss Hooper, I've just received a letter from my father and he's coming East on business and will be in Boston in a few days to see me. I'm so excited I can hardly wait to see him. Just think! It's a long time from September to April."

"How splendid!" said Miss Hooper. "Of course you are very anxious to see him, and no doubt he is as anxious to see you. How very *à propos*, too; I came to talk to you about something particular which you may care to talk over with your father, so I'll tell you now without waiting any longer. I came to ask you if you would like to spend the summer abroad with me and perhaps one or two of the girls. I generally plan to go over every two or three years and have decided to go this year. I knew you liked to travel and could afford to do so, and hoped you would like to

go with me. We need not join any excursion party, but take things leisurely and go where our inclination leads us. I have always wanted to spend a summer in the British Isles, but have never had the opportunity before. If we started the last of June, right after commencement, we should have almost three months, for college does not open until late next fall. You wouldn't mind giving up going home for one summer vacation when there are three more to come, and especially if your father is coming to see you now. What do you think of the idea?"

For a moment Jean could not speak and then she burst out, "Why, Miss Hooper, I wouldn't give up going home to California for anything in the world! Why, do you know, ever since I got father's letter I have been thinking of only one thing, and that was to beg him to take me home with him when he goes. You know, I've never intended to stay here more than one year, and so I can't see what difference it makes whether I go back home now or in June. And how can you want me to go abroad with you? I'm not the

kind of girl you'd like to travel with; I've never been half decent to you since I came. I've tried to, sometimes, but I never can forget how foolishly I acted at the very beginning of the year when I left your mathematics class. If there's ever been one thing which has made me want to return to college another year, it was to apologize to you and take mathematics I over again with some credit to myself and to you. I have been ashamed of myself whenever I have allowed myself to think of it, and I now humbly offer you my apology."

"And I accept it, Jean. May I call you Jean? I felt very bad when I discovered you had left the class and several times I was tempted to ask you the reason, but I thought sometime it would come out all right and you would tell me about it. From the very first I've wanted your friendship and your confidence and I have tried many times to gain it. I felt there was a reason for your attitude towards me and that sometime you would tell me what it was. Will you tell me now?"

"There is not much to tell, Miss Hooper, but what there is you shall hear now. The

first day of the mathematics class you may remember that I was late, and when I entered your room you spoke to me, as you had a perfect right to do, about my tardiness, and reminded me that the class began at nine o'clock and not several minutes after. Then you called on me for the Binomial Theorem, and because I could not remember it you called upon the next girl and after she recited correctly you, indirectly perhaps, blamed me because I did not know it. I am extremely sensitive, I admit, and was keenly hurt because I thought you had criticized me too harshly before the entire class. I realized that my foundation in mathematics was very poor, and I feared my work would be an utter failure, particularly as I had begun in such a way. I acted upon the impulse of the moment and got permission to drop the subject and substitute psychology in its place. Many a time I have regretted it, but it is done and I have been the one to suffer the penalty. It is a very poor explanation, Miss Hooper, but such as it is, I hope you will accept it."

"Yes, Jean, and I see how much to blame

I was, too. My greatest weakness has always been my sarcastic tongue, which I can never quite seem to control, try as I will, and I fear I have caused many another girl unhappiness through my thoughtlessness. I feel that I am as much to blame as you and I offer you my apology. Will you accept it?"

"Yes, indeed, Miss Hooper."

"And now, Jean, that we are talking along this line may I speak a little about your college course? I have been interested in you from the start, and I have followed your work in all the departments very carefully. I know how badly you got behind the first three months and the warnings you received. I know the fresh start you took and the steady progress you have made ever since, and the splendid all-around freshman you are showing yourself to be. I do not want it to stop there. I want you to come back to Ashton for another year, anyway, and, if possible, for the whole four years. You have an influence with the girls; you're a born leader and can accomplish great things or small things as you choose. I think you prefer the great things and it will

take longer than this short year to accomplish them. I am not thinking of your taking my particular course, as you have said you wish to do, that in itself is a little thing, but it is the principle of the thing, for if you conquer that you will conquer the bigger obstacles that must beset your path. Education is not a four years' college course; it is life, and there are always going to be mathematic courses, which, though unpleasant, must be taken up and finished, and the way you meet them then depends upon the start you make now.

"I realize that home means a great deal to you, and so it does to all of us while we have it, and the memories of it last us long after we have lost it, but it will mean all the more to you later on. I know what I am telling you, Jean, for I've lived and learned myself. I'm begging you with all my heart and soul to come back to us and be the fine, splendid woman your father and brothers expect you to become. Perhaps I've said more than I should, but I'm so anxious for you, Jean."

"No, Miss Hooper, it's been splendid to hear you talk like this; it's as my mother would

have talked; it's what I've needed all these years. I've always done pretty much as I wanted to, without considering any one but myself. You're right, I ought to come back and do what father and my brothers want me to do and what you want me to do and what I want to do myself. Yes, I admit it to you now; I've struggled against it all the year. Every time I've said I wasn't coming back I knew it wasn't right. Something in me always said, 'You are coming back; you know you are,' but I wouldn't listen and tried to deceive myself and everybody else, but I can't any longer. I'm coming back and take Mathematics I and French, too, if I fail at June, and I'm going to work with all that's in me for dear old Ashton College.

"Oh, thank you, Miss Hooper, for coming just when you did, for I think if I had seen father first it would have been harder for me to decide the right way. And now that I feel so differently about coming back, perhaps I shall change my mind about the summer vacation. You quite took my breath away by asking me to go with you. I couldn't believe that

you would want to travel with any one as silly as I have continually shown myself to be. You said perhaps there would be one or two other girls. Have you asked any one else?"

"No, Jean, because I wanted to find out first how you felt about it, and if you cared to go I wanted you to suggest others that you would like to have with us. Do you know of any one?"

"Yes, I know of one whom I should prefer above all others and who would enjoy it more than all others, but I'm not going to tell you who it is just now, if you don't mind. I've got to think it all over, and after father has come and we have had a good talk together, I'm going to take him to your room, if I may, and tell you my decision. I'm very favorably inclined, though, at the present moment."

"I agree with you that it would be best to leave it until your father comes and you can talk it over with him. I shall be very glad to have you bring him to see me as often as you care to while he is here. This has been a splendid afternoon, Jean, and I thank you for

it from the bottom of my heart and I hope it is the beginning of many others."

"I think you are the one to be thanked, Miss Hooper, and not I."

"Well, perhaps we both can accept the other's thanks if we feel that we need to, and now I must hurry on or I shall be late for supper and that is a very poor example for a matron to set her girls. Come and see me often. Good-by for to-day," and she hurried down the corridor, leaving Jean smiling at the door.

About a week after this conversation took place a telegram came informing Jean that her father would arrive in Boston on the next day, Wednesday, and she was to meet him at the train. It was a very happy and excited girl who watched the New York express empty its passengers at the South Station, and she was beginning to fear he had been delayed somewhere along the way, for at first she could not find him in the hustling crowd. But after a while, away down the platform, she caught sight of him waving his hat as he saw her up beside the gate. It was a joyful

meeting, and how their tongues did fly! Mr. Cabot had been to New Haven to see Tom and Jean insisted upon hearing all about that.

They sat down in the big waiting-room and talked and talked and looked at each other to be sure it was really they. "I can't believe you're really here, Daddy; it seems as though I were dreaming. Just pinch me and see if I am asleep or awake." A hearty pinch assured Jean that she was awake, but she exclaimed, "Oh, but it's good to have you here with me!"

"Let me look at you, Jeannie dear; you're changed somehow. You look the same and still there's something in your face I've never seen there before. What is it?"

"Nothing, Father, that I know of. I'm just glad I'm alive and you're with me, that's all. How long can you stay with me? I want to know, for there are so many things I want you to do and see."

"I must go back to New York to-morrow night, Jean, for I have an appointment there the following day. How would you like to go back with me, girlie?"

"Do you mean New York, Father, or California?"

"Well, when I spoke I meant New York, but how about California?"

"I should like to go to New York all right, but not to California. I did want to go badly only last week, but it's all over now and I've changed my mind and I want to stay at college the rest of the year and the other three years, too. And I've something to ask you, Dad, about this summer." And then she told him about Miss Hooper's plans for the trip abroad, and they got so interested in it that they forgot entirely where they were and what time it was.

"Why, Father," exclaimed Jean, "here we're wasting perfectly good time sitting in an old railroad station when we might be up town or out at college! Look at the clock; we've been sitting here over two hours. Why, we won't get any supper if we don't hurry. You can stay with me at Merton for supper, and then I've engaged a room for you at the Inn for the rest of the time. I had hoped you would stay over Sunday, anyway. Just think

of all the things I want to show you! When can I do it all?"

"If there isn't time this trip we'll have to do what we can and leave the rest till next winter, for if you're going away from us all summer I'll surely have to find a business call east again soon after you return. Perhaps we had better start now."

There followed a busy twenty-four hours for Jean and her father. He insisted upon meeting all the girls Jean had written him about and he talked with them about the events of the year, for he was perfectly familiar with them through Jean's long, breezy, confidential letters which reached him every Friday regularly. He was introduced to Mrs. Thompson and some of the faculty; he was shown the college buildings, the rare volumes and art treasures in the library, but he wanted most to see the corridor where Elizabeth had fallen asleep. He considered that second only in interest to the roof-stairs where Jean had guarded the flag. He visited the "Pond," and Mrs. McAllister's house, and the society rooms and every other place Jean could find time to take

him. She had promised Miss Hooper that her father and she would have afternoon tea with her at four o'clock and she proudly ushered him into the tiny reception-room at Wellington, which was for Miss Hooper's private use.

They talked about everything in general and Miss Hooper carefully avoided all mention of the European trip until Mr. Cabot said, "I think we ought not to stay much longer, Jean, for you know I must take the 6.17 train for Boston, so hadn't we better tell Miss Hooper what we have decided about Europe?"

"Yes, Father, but suppose you tell her."

"All right, dear; I'm very glad to do so. I'm very grateful to you, Miss Hooper, for the great interest you seem to have taken in my motherless little girl. She's a good girl, though, and I don't blame any one for taking an interest in her. If she wants to go to Europe with you for the summer, I tell her she can go, although we'll miss her terribly out home. She's the light of our house, you know, and it's going to be pretty lonesome without her, but I want her to see the world

and make the most of herself, for nothing but the best will suit us. We're pretty particular, that's why we sent her east, and we want her to stay till you've given her all you've got to give and she feels she's learned enough to come back to California and take care of us. She said you wanted some one else to go with you and she does, too, and when I asked her who it was to be, it didn't take long for her to say 'Elizabeth Fairfax.' So I'm going to send her along with Jean, and I want you to do the same for both of them. Give them whatever you think is best for them and plenty of it. Jean doesn't want Elizabeth to know anything about it yet, for she's planning a surprise, but I'm telling you now so that you can go ahead with your plans and be ready to start the day after Tom's commencement. He's counting on having Jean there that day, for she's got to represent the family, so I shouldn't want to disappoint him; but after June twentieth, the sooner the better. Wish I could go with you, but I can't leave the business this year.

"Just one more cup of tea, thank you, and

we'll be going. This is the best tea I've had since I can remember. Have you learned how to make it, Jean?"

"Yes, Father, I can make tea, but not like Miss Hooper's. Every one says she makes the best tea in college. Now we must go," and after a rather protracted leave-taking they almost ran for the train.

As Miss Hooper was washing her tea-dishes and putting them away, she hummed a little song to herself and said, "No wonder Jean Cabot is such a splendid girl. How can she help it with such a father?"

And as Jean and her father hastened to the little station, Mr. Cabot said to Jean, "Mighty fine woman, that Miss Hooper, mighty fine woman. Almost makes me want to study mathematics myself."

In a few moments he was on the train, waving good-by to Jean, and if she had not had this great new happiness in her heart it would have been very hard to let him go back home without her, but she smiled bravely through her tears and walked back to Merton apparently as happy as ever.

CHAPTER XVI

PRIZE-SPEAKING

JEAN spent the spring vacation with Elizabeth up on "Olympus," as she called their hilltop village, and she found the beauty and new experiences of the spring as fascinating as those of the winter. Although every waking hour seemed filled to the brim, still it was a restful change and the two girls returned to college with new strength and enthusiasm to begin the last term of the year. They would need it all, too, for this is the hardest term of the year, with the hot, drooping days of May and June, and still hotter nights, when studying seems almost impossible and one is content to sit in the darkness and watch the stars and dream such dreams as float through college girls' heads on nights in June, when all the world is theirs.

On the Monday after they returned to college, both girls went up to oratory class in

the afternoon and sat back to enjoy the hour, knowing it was not their turn to mount the platform and hold forth. Jean sat near the open window and was breathing in the balmy air and watching some greedy robins snatch at the worms in the damp, new grass. She had almost forgotten there was such a thing as oratory until Miss Moulton's clear, penetrating voice brought her back to consciousness again.

"Of course you know, young ladies, that prize-speaking is an annual event at Ashton, and it is a great honor to participate in it. Any member of the oratory classes is eligible. In the freshman divisions I have made it a rule that every girl must do one of two things: either she must learn a new selection or choose one already learned during the year and present it to the committee of the faculty chosen to judge the preliminary speakers; or she must write an original poem or prose selection and present it before the freshman oratory classes. The preliminary prize-speaking will take place in the chapel on the evening of May twelfth at eight o'clock. The annual prize-speaking

will take place at three o'clock on the afternoon of June sixth. The classes will meet May twenty-eighth for the afternoon of original work. I hope you will all take great interest in this work and feel free to consult me at any time about it. Unless there are some questions to be asked now, we will consider the class excused."

As the girls left the class-room there was but one topic of conversation, for Miss Moulton had filled their minds with but one thought. Neither one of her propositions pleased the majority of the girls, for one looked as difficult as the other. Of course a few were delighted with what she had said, for they had been anticipating the event and in their hearts had secret hopes of being the prize winner, even though there were upper-class girls to compete with them. The chapel steps looked so attractive in the afternoon sunshine that three or four of the girls wandered over there to sit down for a few moments to discuss the question.

"What are you going to do, Jean?" said Anne Cockran as she limped up to join the

girls. Although it had been a long time since her accident, she could not walk easily yet.

"Don't ask me, Anne; I don't know. I don't like the idea of exhibiting my limited oratorical ability before the faculty, but positively I haven't an original idea in my head. I'll have to think it over."

"Why, nonsense, Jean," said Bess Johnson, "everybody knows that original sonnet you wrote for Miss Whiting last month was the cleverest thing in our whole division. When Miss Whiting condescends to praise anything we freshmen do, you can take it from me that it's pretty good. You don't need to hesitate about going in for the original stunt."

"Elizabeth," said Anne, "you've just got to try for the prize, for there isn't a girl in our whole division that can hold a candle to you. If you give that little poem, 'Carcasson,' with which you won Miss Moulton's heart last term, you'll melt the faculty to tears, and they'll put you on the finals before you've finished the second verse."

"Oh, Anne, you flatterer, why I couldn't compete with you or a half-dozen more of the

girls in our division, to say nothing of the upper-class girls," replied Elizabeth, smiling. "I'm trying for credit in my German, and perhaps history, and it takes every spare moment I can get to do my collateral reading. It seems as though Miss Evans tried to see how much work she could pile on us. I think I'll try at the preliminaries, though, because it's easier than working on something original. I can give something I learned last term, 'Carcasson,' if you all like that so well."

"Like it?" said Jean. "Why, Beth, it's by far the best thing anybody has done in class this whole year and you've just got to give it, and I know you'll make the finals, and if you do, why, we'll all insist upon your trying for all your worth for the prize. Why shouldn't a freshman win it? Think of the honor for the class. You've been saying lately you wished you could do something for 1915, and here's your chance. Why, I think it's an honor just to be on the finals even if you don't win the prize. Who knows how many are generally chosen?"

"Eight, I think," said Bess Johnson. "I

was looking over Edith Thayer's memorabilia the other day and saw a last year's programme. Edith spoke last year, but didn't win a prize. As I remember it, there were eight speakers. Anyway, there were somewhere near that number."

"What is the prize, Bess?" asked Anne. "Miss Moulton forgot to say anything about that, and I think it's the most important item."

"The first prize is twenty-five dollars in gold and the second and third ten dollars each. Of course it's the honor more than the money that counts," said Bess, whose idea of money values was very hazy, being abundantly supplied by an indulgent father. Although Elizabeth said nothing she thought the twenty-five dollars would help her a great deal if, by any chance, it came her way, for she needed a new dress and hat for class-day, but she hated to ask her father for anything more this year.

"Well," said Jean, "this loafing here will never do for me. It's society meeting to-night and I've got a theme to write before supper. If any of you want to see me, come right down to the room and make yourselves

comfortable, but don't talk to me until I've finished my theme. I think the subjects get worse and worse every week. Where do you suppose Miss Whiting ever finds them? I should think her poor head would ache many a time before she found some to really suit her. I wonder if she ever corrects half of the themes."

"I doubt it," said Bess; "they say Mary Dudley corrects the themes in the daily theme course, for she's doing special work in the English for her degree."

All the girls seemed to have plenty to do, and Jean went down to 45 alone and worked on her theme for the next day and finished it just as the supper bell rang.

When the preliminary prize-speaking took place, it was surprising how many entries there were, especially among the freshmen, for undoubtedly most of them had decided that this was the lesser of the two evils offered them by Miss Moulton. From the large number there were eight chosen for the finals and among them was Elizabeth Fairfax, the only freshman thus honored. There were three

seniors, two juniors, two sophomores and the one freshman, and 1915 was jubilant over the fact that one of its members was chosen. When Elizabeth first heard of it she was a little frightened and declared she never could do it, but when she saw how all the freshmen felt the honor that was hers in being chosen to represent them, she determined to enter the contest with all the best that was in her and prove to them that she was as loyal to 1915 as any of the rest of them.

She spent hours and hours with Miss Moulton and finally decided upon a selection which, like the others, was to be kept secret until the programme was announced. Every minute that she could spare from her regular work she put upon her selection, and as the fatal day drew near she went again and again to the chapel and mounted the platform to move the empty seats with her eloquence. Miss Moulton gave all the girls equal coaching, and worked harder, perhaps, than all the girls together. When she had heard the last girl rehearse her selection for the last time, she closed the chapel door behind her with a bang

and locking it said to herself and the clinging ivy on the tower wall, "I wish there were eight prizes so they all could have one, for they all deserve one, still I hope —"

But she did not finish, for in the gathering dusk she recognized Elizabeth Fairfax's slender figure advancing toward her. "Oh, Miss Moulton, can I have just one more rehearsal to-night? There's one place toward the end that troubles me."

"No, Miss Fairfax, not to-night; you are tired and nervous and you must do nothing more. Take my advice and think no more of your selection to-night; go to bed early and have a good night's sleep and to-morrow morning you will have forgotten all about these imaginary troubles. It's always darkest just before the dawn, you know, so let's not think any more about prize-speaking. I'm very tired to-night, too, but I'm going home to read some really thrilling detective story or something equally absorbing until I get sleepy, and then away to bed in spite of all the work I ought to do. I advise you not to do any studying to-night, for you are ex-

cused from to-morrow's lessons. Good night, Miss Fairfax. I wish you a restful night and success to-morrow," and the two went their separate ways.

There could not have been a more beautiful June day than the one chosen for prize-speaking. The sun shed its warmth and brightness over everything, and the little green leaves danced merrily in the soft summer wind. The rain of a few days before had freshened the grass and the flowers until it seemed as though they were outdoing themselves for this special occasion. Merry little red and gray squirrels ran up and down the great tall trees and then across the wide paths, out of sight to another tree, and some of the bolder birds sang lustily as if proud of their share in the day's festivities. All nature seemed to be clapping its hands to applaud the eight nervous speakers concealed somewhere in the rear of the chapel.

Prize-speaking Day is properly considered the forerunner of Class Day and Commencement, hence the friends of the college make every effort to attend this annual event.

Long before three o'clock the seating capacity of the chapel seemed taxed to its utmost, and the gallery had to be opened to accommodate the waiting throng. Members of the various oratory classes had been chosen as ushers and were pretty indeed in their white dresses, with sprays of green ivy twisted in their hair, and they carried batons wound with white and green ribbons. Jean was one of the two representatives of the freshman class and was enjoying every moment of her ushering, for it was the first time she had ever served in this capacity, as only the upper-class girls ushered at Vespers on Sunday afternoons.

A few minutes after three o'clock, Miss Emerson welcomed the guests to the exercises of the afternoon and announced the entire programme of the days to come. Then she informed them that the three judges were from neighboring colleges and at the close of the speaking she would announce their decision regarding the prize. In conclusion, she asked that there be no applause, and then took her seat with the other members of the faculty in the front row of seats usually occupied by

the seniors. One after another of the speakers came upon the platform, did their very best, thrilled their listeners and then took their seats on the front row of the annex which had been reserved for them.

Last on the programme was Elizabeth Fairfax and she was to give Tennyson's "Lady of Shalot." When she came upon the platform she looked very small and white, and her simple muslin dress was the one she had worn the year before at her high-school graduation. Instead of coming to the front of the platform as the others had done, she stood back almost in the center of the stage, where it was a little dark in spite of the brilliance of the outdoor world. She stood for a moment without uttering a sound, and more than one of the vast audience thought she must have become stagestruck and forgotten the lines, but soon her sweet, clear voice began:

"On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;"

And she held every listener spellbound as she told the sad sweet story of the Lady of

310 JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

Shalot as though she were inspired, and when she finished with:

"But Launcelot mused a little space:
He said, 'She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalot.'"

For a moment there was absolute silence, and then followed tremendous applause in spite of what Miss Emerson had said. Every one looked at her neighbor as much as to say, "There's not a question but that she deserves the prize. I never heard anything like it."

So there was not great surprise a little later when Miss Emerson in her quiet way announced the prize-winners and first called upon Miss Elizabeth Fairfax to come to the platform. In presenting her with the tiny box which held the twenty-five dollars in gold, she congratulated her upon her excellent work and said that for the first time in her memory the first prize had been given to a freshman, consequently she might be doubly proud of what she had done. Elizabeth thanked her, and very white and trembling took her place with the other speakers.

This ended the exercises and as the audience arose many went forward to offer their congratulations. Jean seized Elizabeth and whispered, "You were just wonderful, but I knew you'd do it. Oh, I'm so proud of you and I wish Dick could have been here," and she gave her place to a long line of girls and faculty, who were waiting their turn to speak to her.

When Elizabeth went up to her room from the supper-table that night she was tired but very happy, for her dream of doing something worth while for 1915 was realized. She walked slowly down the corridor and opened the door, expecting to find Jean there, for she did not see her in the reading-room with the other girls as she passed by the open door. She did not see Jean in 45, but she gave a little gasp at the sight which did meet her gaze. The study-table which usually stood in the center of the room was drawn up between the couch and Elizabeth's desk. It had been cleared of the books and lamp which usually adorned it and was one mass of brilliant bloom. There were roses and carna-

tions and sweet peas and lilies of the valley filling the room with their sweetness. For several moments Elizabeth just gazed and then walking up to the flowers' found there were cards attached to each bouquet. The roses were from Jean, the carnations from Miss Hooper, the sweet peas from Merton House girls, and the lilies from Miss Moulton. Elizabeth had never had so many flowers in all her life before and could not quite believe they were all hers. She buried her face in the great American Beauty roses and was whispering a secret to them when Jean came out from the bedroom.

"Well, little room-mate, what do you think of yourself now? I couldn't stay away another minute. The flowers came while we were at supper and I hustled upstairs the minute I was through so I could have them arranged before you came. Then after everything was ready I waited and waited, but I thought you never would come. When at last I heard you coming down the hall, I hid in the bedroom to see what you would do. You looked just about as surprised as when Miss

Emerson called you to the platform this afternoon."

"Of course I was surprised, Jean. I never had so much happen to me in one day before in all my life and I can hardly believe it's true. How I wish Father and Brother could know all about it and see what you've done for me! I must sit down and write to them now so the letter will go out the first thing in the morning."

"Before you write your letter, Elizabeth, I want to ask you something. Come over here on your couch and sit down, for you are tired, and we can enjoy the flowers there just as well as standing up in the middle of the room."

"All right, Jean, but let me take one of your roses with me. It's the first time I've ever had an American Beauty of my very own. How good you were to give them to me! You must have known how badly I have wanted one."

In a moment the two girls sat down upon Elizabeth's couch and in Elizabeth's hand was a beautiful, long-stemmed rose. "What are

you going to do this summer, Beth?" asked Jean.

"I don't quite know yet," Elizabeth answered. "I feel as though I were needed at home so that mother can go away to visit her people in Vermont, but I wish I could find some work to do, for I want to earn the money for next year to help father all I can. Some of the girls are talking about waiting on the table at the beach or at the mountains and I thought of applying, too. Christine Newell is going to the White Mountains and says she went last year and earned fifty dollars. She wants me to go there with her, but I haven't decided yet."

"Before you decide, Elizabeth, I want to tell you something, and perhaps it will alter your plans a little. Miss Hooper is going abroad for the summer and has invited me to go with her. When father was here I told him about it and my decision to stay at Ashton for the four years. He was so delighted that he consented to the trip abroad for the summer and said I might take any girl with me that I chose. Now I have chosen you,

Elizabeth, and I want you to say you will go to the British Isles with Miss Hooper and me for your vacation. I have known about it ever since father was here and it has been awfully hard to keep it a secret, but I wanted to wait until after prize-speaking, for I made up my mind that if you didn't win the first prize I should offer you this as a consolation prize, and if you did win the prize then this would be my own special prize. What do you say, will you accept my prize, too?"

At first Elizabeth could not speak and just looked straight at Jean as if to determine whether or not she was jesting. "Why, Jean Cabot! What are you talking about? I spend a whole summer in Europe? Why, you must be dreaming. I've never been out of New England and don't expect to go to Europe till I've taught years and years. Why, all the money I have in the world is this twenty-five dollars I won to-day and I need that to buy my class-day dress and hat and shoes. Where do you suppose I'd ever get the money? Why, it takes more than it does to go to college."

"You big goosie, you don't understand. You needn't consider the money; I'm going to take you for my companion and it isn't to cost you a penny. Father would like to go himself and would if it wasn't for business, so he wants you to go with me in his place. Don't you see now what I mean?"

"Yes, Jean, but why do you want me? There are so many of the other girls like Peggy and Natalie and Sallie, who have traveled and know more about the world than I. I'm pretty green, you know, when it comes to society."

"Nonsense, Elizabeth; if I hadn't wanted you more than any one else I shouldn't have asked you. Is it 'yes' or 'no'? Quick!"

"Why, you take my breath away, Jean. I can't believe you want me to go with you."

"Yes, I do, I tell you, and you must say 'yes,' for I shan't take any other answer. Now write your letter home and tell them what you are going to do, or rather get their permission to do what you wish to do. After you finish the letter we'll take it down to the

office and then go over to Miss Hooper's room for a minute. You want to thank her for the flowers she sent you, and I want to tell her that you are going with us. She will tell you what her plans are, and from now on we must do a lot of reading with her about the places we are to visit, for we don't want to appear to be perfect ignoramuses in the land of our forefathers. Of course you know English history from A to Z, but I can never tell one king from another and always mix up all the battles and wars, so it's good hard reading from now on for me."

"Of course you know I'd like to go, Jean, but it's so sudden I can't quite grasp it all, but I'll write home and tell them all about it, and when I hear from them I can tell you definitely."

"I'm going to write a letter to your father this very minute, too, and tell him what I think about the matter. Let's see who will finish first."

Both pens scratched away at a merry rate, and each girl found so much to say that the

college clock struck eight before either one realized it. "There, I've finished," said Jean. "How about you?"

"I have a little more on this page and then I'll be ready. You collect the letters on the hall windows and go downstairs and register and I'll be through by that time."

After the letters were dropped into the box outside the post office, Jean exclaimed, "There, that's off my mind! Now to tell Miss Hooper."

They found Miss Hooper alone in her study lying on the couch because of a severe headache. The girls insisted that she remain there in spite of her protests. "We're only going to stay a minute, anyway, Miss Hooper. I've come to tell you that Elizabeth has consented to travel with us this summer." Elizabeth opened her mouth to say something, but Jean began again, "She hasn't really said she would go, but she's written home and after she hears from her father she'll tell us 'yes' pretty quickly. Won't you, Elizabeth?"

"I think it's wonderful, Miss Hooper, but it's just like Jean, always doing something to

give pleasure to other people. I want to thank you, too, for the beautiful flowers you sent me. I don't deserve all the good things that have come to me to-day."

"If you didn't deserve them, dear, I am sure they never would come to you. We shall be a very congenial trio, I am sure, this summer, and I wish you both would come to see me Wednesday evening next so we can talk over our plans. I have a list of reading to give to you. Jean tells me you are a lover of history and literature, Elizabeth, so perhaps you have read my list already. If so, we shall depend upon you for a great deal of our information, for there is very little time left in which to do a great deal of work. I am sorry I do not feel better to-night, for we might have begun now."

"No, Miss Hooper, we must not stay a moment longer," said Jean. "Elizabeth is tired, too, and we both have a little studying to do before ten o'clock bell. I hope your head will be better in the morning. Good night."

"Good night to both of you, and thank you

for coming," said Miss Hooper, and the two girls left Wellington and strolled slowly homeward in the shimmering moonlight. As they neared Merton, Elizabeth broke the silence. "I hate to go indoors, Jean, and have this splendid day end. I am inclined to believe it's all been a dream. Pinch me and let me see if I'm really awake."

"Oh, you're awake all right, Elizabeth," said Jean, but she gave Elizabeth's arm a vigorous pinch to assure her that she really was awake. "It's only the beginning of a whole summer of splendid days if you'll only say you'll go with us."

"I'll go, of course," said Elizabeth, "if father thinks it's all right," and the two girls left the summer moonlight behind them and climbed the stairs to 45.

CHAPTER XVII

THE TENNIS TOURNAMENT

IT did not take long for a letter to come back to the two girls from Dr. Fairfax, gladly giving his consent to the proposed plan for the summer and expressing his gratitude to Jean and her father for giving so much happiness to his "little girl," as he always called Elizabeth in spite of the fact that she had long since grown up. Both girls were highly elated over the prospects of their trip, and for the first few days could hardly keep their mind on anything else. However, they both were determined to make the most of the last days of college and each found her different interests absorbing. Elizabeth had been putting all her spare time on her extra work in history and Jean hers on the tennis courts.

Ever since warm weather had made outdoor sports possible, the indoor gymnasium

work had ceased, and the girls athletically inclined found plenty to interest them out of doors. Ashton could well boast of its splendid tennis courts directly back of the gymnasium, and on any pleasant day one would find the courts crowded. Jean had been out from the first day the courts were ready for use, and was easily acknowledged to be one of the best players in college — without a question the best player in the freshman class. Several of the upper-class girls, among them Natalie Lawton, Madeline Moore, and Avis Purrington, were working hard and had announced their intentions of going into the tournament. All along Jean had also secretly determined to enter, if it were a possible thing, and she wanted to win, too. It was her last chance to really do something for 1915, freshman year. The only obstacle that stood in her way was her fear of failure in French, but when she went to Mlle. Franchant late in May and asked her concerning her work, her joy knew no bounds when she was told that her mark was a passing one and she could enter the tournament.

On the night of the twelfth of June, the day before the tournament began, several of the tennis enthusiasts were down in Natalie Lawton's room discussing the events of the next day. "What do you think of the weather, Nat?" said Peggy to her room-mate, who stood at the window, apparently lost in thought as she gazed out into the dark and cloudy night.

"Doesn't look very promising, girls, does it? It will be a shame if it rains. We have had such perfect weather all the month it seems as though it might last two days longer. The courts are in perfect condition now and a heavy rain will spoil everything. How's your courage, Jean? You've drawn first round, haven't you, against Cora Hammond? I'm in the other court against Avis Purrington. How's your shoulder to-night?"

"A little lame, Nat," said Jean, "but I'm going to rub it well and turn in early, for I need the sleep all right. I'm dead to the world. If you don't mind, I think I'll say good night now, rival. Are any of the rest of you coming upstairs with me? You all need

sleep, so take my advice and stop eating that candy and get a good night's sleep."

"Well, who ever heard of such nerve?" said Natalie. "The idea of a little freshie giving advice to us seniors and juniors. But then, I guess you're right in spite of your age, for I admit I'm tired, too. Suppose we all follow suit and turn in."

"Good night, girls," called out Peggy. "Good luck to you all, although, of course, you can't all win the prize. By the way, what is the prize?"

"Why, Peggy," said Natalie disgustedly, "you know perfectly well that there isn't any prize. It's the honor of the thing. Isn't that enough?"

"Yes," said Peggy; "I'd forgotten about it. Well, 'Happy dreams,'" and then the girls scattered to their different rooms.

In spite of the gloomy outlook of the weather the night before, the morning of June twelfth was as perfect as its predecessors had been, and all that the tennis players could wish for. The preliminaries were to be played throughout the day, as the programmes

of the girls allowed. On the next morning were to come the semi-finals and in the afternoon the finals, when excitement always ran highest. About twenty of the girls had entered the tournament and most of them were speedy players. There were only two freshmen — and the others upper-class girls. Although Natalie Lawton had won the championship the year before, it had been with great difficulty, and her opponent, Madeline Moore, was all the more anxious to win out this year. Popular sentiment had picked Natalie Lawton, Madeline Moore, or Jean Cabot as the winner this year, so it was not at all surprising to the student body as a whole to learn that at the end of the preliminaries these three and a hitherto unsuspected sophomore, Mabel Hastings, were to play in the semi-finals on the following morning. It was rather a coincidence that each of the four classes should have a representative.

The semi-finals took place at ten o'clock, and there were some of the hardest sets ever played at Ashton. Jean was playing Mabel Hastings and won after five sets, 7-5, 1-6,

326 JEAN CABOT AT ASHTON

6-8, 6-3, 6-1 and Natalie Lawton won from Madeline Moore in three sets, 6-2, 6-2, 6-1; so Natalie and Jean were left to fight for the finals in the afternoon. Jean was so excited that she declared she could eat no dinner, and hurried to her room to lie down and rest until the finals, which were to begin at three o'clock. Elizabeth carried up her dinner and compelled her to eat all that she had brought her, knowing how much she needed nourishment after her violent exercise of the morning. Then Jean lay quietly in her room, although she could not sleep from excitement, and she waited for the minutes to pass until it should be half-past two o'clock.

It seemed as though every girl in college had turned out to see the finals. The early comers had filled the few seats which the ground afforded; the rest either sat on the grass or stood in little groups near by. Here and there among the white dresses could be seen the severely dark clothes of a man, for it was one of the few events to which the "masculine element" could be invited. This event was followed so closely by Class Day and Com-

mencement that some of the favorite brothers or cousins or friends of the seniors were inveigled into coming a little earlier, ostensibly to witness a tennis tournament, but in reality to bask a little longer in the sunshine of the Sweet Girl Graduate.

Promptly on the stroke of three, Jean and Natalie, in their immaculate white linens, walked coolly out upon the courts and the play began. By the toss of the racket Jean won the first serving and sent one of her usual swift balls into the opposite court. Natalie was there to receive it and sent it back as swiftly as it had come. Both girls seemed very evenly matched, but Natalie, by deep driving to Jean's backhand, won the first game. Her luck changed at this point though, and Jean jumped into the lead of 3-1. Natalie seemed spurred on by this, and by more hard, deep driving soon had Jean on the run. She played into the net oftener and with this style of play the lead changed to Natalie at 4-3. The eighth game was very close. Jean got to 30-40 on Natalie's serve, but fast driving on Natalie's part won

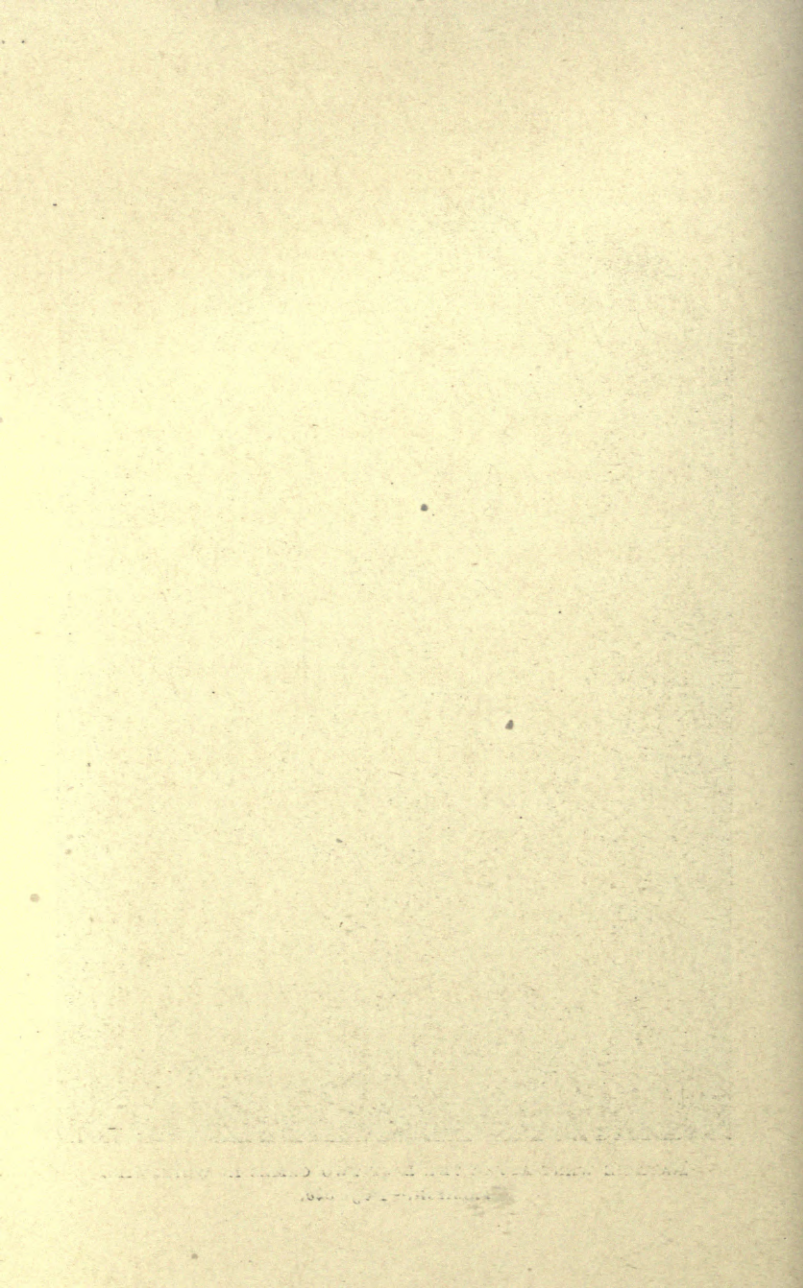
her the game, making the score 5-3 in her favor. Jean won her serve in the next game and even got an advantage in the tenth, but then the last year's champion rose to the occasion and by taking a net position, won three successive points and the first set with a score of 6-4.

There was a rest of fifteen minutes before the second set, and the two players left the court and retired to the gymnasium. The crowds out of doors circulated around the grounds, introducing their guests and talking over the remarkable playing of both girls. At the end of the fifteen minutes the players returned and, changing courts, began the second set.

This set was not as close as the first one but was as full of spectacular playing. Natalie took the net oftener and by splendid smashing ran the score up to 4-1 in her favor. Weakening a little in the next game, she failed to return Jean's excellent service, so Jean took advantage of it and won her second game in the set. This seemed almost to enrage Natalie, and she went after the last



NATALIE WENT AFTER THE LAST TWO GAMES IN WHIRLWIND FASHION.—*Page 328.*



two games in whirlwind fashion and outplayed Jean in every way, making the final score of the second set 6-2. It was all over before Jean realized it, and she had lost, and Natalie had won the college championship for a second time.

She saw the girls hurrying toward Natalie, but she was determined to be the first to congratulate her, so she dropped her racket and ran as fast as she could to the spot where the almost exhausted champion had dropped. "Congratulations, Natalie," she said; "you certainly deserve the championship, and I'm mighty glad you won it."

All Natalie could say was, "Thank you, Jean, but I hate to take it away from you, for you wanted it so badly."

"Don't you worry about that," said Jean, smiling bravely. "I've got three more years to try for it, and you've only one. I'll have it yet, see if I don't. And I'd rather have you win it than any one else in college. We kept it from the sophs, anyway, and there's a lot of consolation in that. I'm monopolizing you, Nat, for all the girls are waiting to

offer you their congratulations. It was splendid; that's all I've got to say."

Jean had to acknowledge to herself that she was terribly disappointed, but as soon as she realized she had lost, she decided to make the most of it and not let any one else see her real feelings in the matter. She smiled in her most friendly manner to all of the girls who came to compliment her on her splendid playing, and to offer their sympathy for her defeat. She was as much surrounded as the real champion and accepted all of the homage in a most gracious way, although she secretly longed to be away from it all and alone by herself to have it out once for all. It was some time before she could leave the girls, for it was an ideal day to linger out of doors and no one seemed to be in a hurry to leave the courts. At last she managed to tear herself away from a gushing freshman and her fond mamma who was visiting Ashton for the first time, and felt the necessity of seeing everything and everybody worth while, and started down towards Merton hoping that she would not be held up again.

She had gone but a little way when she heard some one calling to her from behind. At first she pretended not to hear, but the calls became louder and more insistent, so she turned around and saw Anne Cockran hurrying towards her and waving for her to stop. There was nothing to do but wait, so she stopped right where she was until Anne caught up with her.

"I've been looking everywhere for you, Jean. Where have you been? Every time I got my eye on you on the courts you were completely surrounded by fond admirers and I couldn't get within ten feet of you. Finally I got discouraged and went over to talk with Bess Allison and some friends of hers, and when I left them and looked for you there wasn't a trace of you anywhere."

"I was held up by that gushing Gladys Norton and her mother, and thought I never should get away from them, and when I finally managed to extricate myself I was so tired of people and conversation that I made a bee-line for Merton."

"Which means," broke in Anne, "that you

wish I hadn't butted in to bother you some more. That's just the reason you didn't stop when I called to you. Well, cheer up, Jean, I'll not bother you long; I just wanted to talk to you a few moments, but I'll leave it until another time if you want me to."

"No, Anne dear, of course not; but it was just because I was tired and disappointed and felt a little grouchy at every one. You know how you felt the night of the freshman-sophomore basket-ball game when you got hurt and couldn't play any more. We both know what it is to be disappointed, don't we? But I'm better already with just seeing you this short time, so tell me what you wanted to and I promise you my undivided attention."

"I wanted to ask you something rather than tell you something, and I'm just a little afraid to do so. You know room-drawing comes the day before Class Day and I wanted to know if you had made your plans for roommate next year. I want to ask you to live with me. I'm sort of tired of Merton and perhaps one of us will draw another house and choose the other for room-mate. I don't

want to room with Sallie another year. She's a dandy girl and we've had a good year together, but isn't just exactly my style, and then besides, she's a soph and we are always at swords' points when it comes to class spirit. But you are just the girl I want. We're in the same class and society and we like the same things and the same people and we both want to make basket-ball next year and I'm going in for tennis, too. I've never played a game in my life, but after to-day's games I wouldn't miss it for anything. Of course you don't want to room with Elizabeth another year. She's all nice enough and a fine student, but not at all your style. She'll probably want a single, anyway, won't she?"

"I don't know, Anne," said Jean very thoughtfully.

"Well, anyway, Jean, it doesn't make any difference to us what she wants to do, the main thing is that I want to room with you. What have you to say about it?"

"Why really Anne, I haven't thought anything about next year. I've been so happy these days with things just as they are that

I guess I thought everything was going on as it is now. When we are contented we don't want to change, do we? It's awfully nice of you to say that you want to have me room with you and I appreciate it, but honestly, Anne, I can't do it. Why, if Elizabeth will have me, I want to go on rooming with her. I couldn't really stay at college without her. She's my safety-valve and inspiration and all that sort of thing. She brings out the best that's in me and I need her more than anything else in the whole college, and then, besides, I think the world of her. She's the most lovable girl you can imagine, after you get to know her. I admit she doesn't go in for clothes and men and good times generally, but she's clever and she's going to amount to something before she leaves this place. I haven't asked her yet; but if she's willing I want her for my room-mate next year, and it doesn't make much difference where we room. I've grown very fond of Merton, but I'd prefer Wellington where Miss Hooper lives.

“By the way, I'll tell you a secret. Miss

Hooper and Elizabeth and I are going to travel together this summer in the British Isles. Isn't that splendid? Now, Anne, please don't be angry with me because I won't room with you. You see how it is. We can be the same good friends as ever, can't we, even if we're not room-mates?"

"Yes, I suppose so," said Anne, "but I'm disappointed and I can't get over it in a minute. I can't understand what you see in Elizabeth; she seems to have hypnotized you from the very first of the year. She's all right and sweet and good enough, but I can't understand your awful crush on her."

"There, there," said Jean, "don't get so excited or you'll be saying things you'll be sorry for later on. Will you come up to 45 until supper time? I want to get into some fresh clothes. I feel as though I'd been through a Turkish bath. Wasn't it frightfully hot in the sun? It was right in my eyes the last game. Isn't Nat a perfect wonder at the game?"

"Yes, but so are you, and I was just boiling that you didn't win. You put up a much

better game than she did all through the 'prelims' and semi-finals; you had all the hardest players up against you, and by the time you got to the finals you were all tired out. I think you deserve as much credit as Natalie, even if she did win at the end."

"My goodness, Anne, but you've got it in for everybody this afternoon! Come upstairs with me and eat some candy and see if that will sweeten you a little."

"All right, I will, thank you; I haven't had any candy for an age. I'm dead broke since I bought my Class-Day hat and I don't get another cent until I go home. I'm afraid I'll even have to borrow some money to buy my ticket home unless Dad will be favorably impressed by my last frantic appeal for a little more money."

The girls finished a large box of chocolates, and by supper time Anne was in a much better mood, although still disappointed because Jean was not to room with her. When Jean came up from supper that night a little later than usual she found Elizabeth at her desk writing a letter. She stole softly up behind

her and put her hands over her eyes and called out, "Guess who's your room-mate next year, Elizabeth."

"Oh, is it you, Jean? I've been wanting all day to ask you about it, but I didn't quite dare. I heard some of the girls talking about the room-drawing last night when I was waiting on table, and that was the first time I knew anything about it. I thought things would go on just the same every year unless one wanted to change."

"And do you want to change, Elizabeth?"

"No, Jean, but I wasn't so sure about you. There are so many of your other friends, you know."

"Well, Elizabeth, I'm perfectly satisfied with my present room-mate and don't intend to change her for any one else. I wish we might room in Wellington so we could be near Miss Hooper, but wherever we are we'll be together, won't we? Now I must write a letter to Tom about Class Day, for he wants to know everything he's expected to do, and if I don't get the letter mailed in the morning he won't have time to make any elaborate

preparations. Have you any message to send him?"

"Why, no, Jean; I'll save them until I meet him Class Day. Now get to writing, for it will be ten o'clock before you know it and you must be tired after your strenuous day."

"Yes, I am tired," said Jean, "but this letter must be written if it takes till midnight," and she wrote several pages of full particulars about Class Day to Tom, who was to be her special guest on that day. He was to take her back with him for Yale Commencement and then see her safely to New York, where she was to meet Miss Hooper and Elizabeth the day before sailing.

CHAPTER XVIII

CLASS DAY

CLASS DAY at Ashton always came on a Friday with Commencement the following Wednesday, and although the undergraduates were not generally expected to remain over for the latter event, they all took great interest in the former and made it the gala day of the year. Each girl had the privilege of inviting as many guests as she wished, but it pretty generally narrowed down to one, except in the case of the graduates who had all their mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, cousins, and friends to entertain besides "the one" who generally hung around in the background, endeavoring to be gracious when the opportunity presented itself.

On the night before Class Day, Jean and Elizabeth were busy in their room with their clothes for the following day. Jean was not

satisfied with Elizabeth's hat which she had brought out from town that very afternoon. "Now, Elizabeth, do your hair low as you intend to wear it to-morrow and let me see what I can do in the way of trimming hats. I don't like this shape at all the way it is now. It's not at all becoming, and I want you to look your prettiest to-morrow. The roses are a beautiful pink, but they want to come down lower on the hat."

While she was talking, Elizabeth had been fixing her hair and had coiled it low on her neck. "Does that suit your Majesty now? You're altogether too fussy about my personal appearance. Who do you suppose will notice me in all the crowd? If I had a man coming over from Harvard or Yale it would be different, but wandering about by myself no one will know whether my hair is up or down or whether my hat is the latest thing from New York or trimmed at home by the country milliner."

"Why, Elizabeth, how can you talk so? Remember Tom is going to be your guest as well as mine. We three are going to do

things together, so you'd better make up your mind to look your prettiest, for Tom is mighty particular when it comes to girls. There, your hair looks much better and the hat fits down closer to your head. I'm going to take off the bow and put it on the other side after I've put the roses down flat around the crown. They're too stiff, sticking up in the air. Now look in the glass and see how you like the effect."

"Oh, it does look ever so much better, Jean. Just stick in some pins where you want things to go and I'll do the sewing."

"No, you won't; I'm going to finish it. Who says I can't trim hats?"

Just then there came a vigorous knock at the study door. Jean seized the hat from Elizabeth's head, and still holding it in her hand hastened out into the other room just as Peggy Allison, acting upon Jean's cordial, "Come in," entered the room.

"Going into the hat business, Jean? I wish you'd take a look at my hat. I'm awfully disappointed in it now that I've got it out here. It doesn't look at all as I ex-

pected it would. Guess it will have to do, though. I haven't time to bother with another. That's the trouble with waiting until the last moment to do things, but I do hate buying hats in Boston. What time do you expect Tom, Jean?"

"He's coming over from New York on the midnight, so he'll probably be out here between ten and eleven o'clock. I told him there was no need of coming before ten, anyway, and I'll be busy until that time with our chain, for we have left part of it until morning to finish, as our daisies gave out. Is your part finished?"

"Yes; we were through about five o'clock and were tired as dogs. Oh, by the way, Jean, Nat wants to see you a moment about the spread tickets right away, so I'll excuse you and visit a little while with Elizabeth if she isn't too busy to talk with me."

"All right, Peggy; I'll go down there this minute and take my hat along to finish. Beth, please hand me my sewing-bag on the couch. Thank you," and then she ran down the stairs with a knowing smile on her face.

About an hour later Jean burst into 45 and found Elizabeth alone. "Come, Beth, I'm ready to have you try on your hat again. I've finished it, and when I tried it on Natalie it looked simply stunning. Come over to the glass where you can see yourself."

As Elizabeth went over to where Jean was standing, Jean caught sight of a small bow of green ribbon pinned conspicuously on the left side of Elizabeth's white shirt-waist. "Oh, Elizabeth," she cried, "are you really pledged to Gamma Chi? It's too good to be true! Now I've got everything I've wanted. You're to room with me next year, spend the summer with me in Europe, and be initiated into Gamma Chi when we return in the fall. I've known all the year that when the girls came to know you as well as I did, they'd want you to join Gamma Chi, but I didn't tell them, for it was much better that they should find it out for themselves. Oh, isn't it splendid! You're my sister now, you know, forever."

"But, Jean, didn't you know anything about it until just now? You don't act so awfully surprised."

“ Oh, yes; I have known since last society meeting that you were to be invited to join, but just when I didn't know, for it was Peggy Allison's duty to ask you. But the minute she came into the room to-night and kindly invited me to leave, I knew what was about to happen. Were you surprised yourself and are you pleased? ”

“ Yes, Jean; I was surprised, but it's only one more of the things I thought could never happen to me. It seemed all right that you and the other girls should do them, but I seemed different from you all. I am glad to join, for I've wanted to go with you so the Monday nights when you went to society. You society girls always seemed better friends than those outside, and I felt I was missing something. I can't see, though, why they should want me to join.”

“ Well, I shan't tell you again, for fear of making you too conceited. It's enough to know that they do want you, and now you're to become a good, loyal member of Gamma Chi. Oh, you must wear your ribbon all day to-morrow. It will show off nicely on your

white dress. Is there anything else I can do to help you? We mustn't leave anything until to-morrow, for there's so much to be done then. Directly after breakfast you must go up to the gym to help finish our daisy-chain. I'm going out before breakfast to help gather more daisies, so if I don't get back in time to eat breakfast, just save me a roll and a glass of milk. Tom will arrive on that half-past ten train, probably, and I must meet him, for he doesn't know anything about the Hill."

"Do you suppose he'll get lost, Jean, if you don't happen to meet him? What makes you take the time to go to the train?"

"Why, do you suppose I'd let him come all that distance without meeting him? What are you thinking about, Elizabeth?"

"Well, don't try to do too much to-morrow, for you've got to save some strength for your week at New Haven. Tom, being so particular about girls, will want his sister to look her prettiest, especially as she's to be the solitary representative of his large family. There's the bell! Hadn't we better stop talking and go to bed?"

"Yes, Beth, I suppose so; but I'm not a bit sleepy to-night. I could sit up till midnight and just talk. You go to bed. I think I'll just read a little more of this story and perhaps I'll get sleepy."

"Oh, don't read any more, Jean; you'll be sleepy enough after you once get into bed. It's excitement that makes you feel so wide awake."

"All right, dear, I'll do as you say. You see I do need you to make me take care of myself," and the two happy but tired girls were soon in their beds and asleep.

Jean had set the alarm clock for half-past five o'clock, and dressing in some old clothes started for the field back of the dormitories where it was white with daisies. She was chairman of the committee to make the daisy-chain, and was anxious that it be a success. She found four of the other girls ahead of her filling great baskets which they had brought for the purpose. After they had picked all they could possibly carry they went up to the gymnasium and began weaving the chain. When they arrived, it was long after the

breakfast hour, but one girl, more thoughtful than the others, had brought a box or two of crackers and so saved her starving companions. More girls arrived every few minutes, and all worked hard, so that they were able to finish the long chain about half-past nine o'clock. They looked much the worse for wear and their dresses were wet and stained from the flowers, and Jean's hair was fast coming down round her face and neck. Her dress was badly torn in the front where she had stepped upon it in her haste to get into the gymnasium.

As she and Elizabeth and Anne were hurrying down the Row to Merton, Anne, looking down toward the station, spied a young man coming in their direction, with a suit-case in his hand. "Here comes some one's man," she said. "Hope he's early enough. Evidently some one forgot to meet him."

"Why, girls," exclaimed Jean, "there's something strangely familiar about him. I do believe it's my brother Tom. He must have taken an earlier train than I wrote him about. What a sight I am to meet him! I

had planned to dress in my very best and go down to the ten-thirty train, and here I am looking more like a tramp than anything else. It is Tom, and I can't help how I look; I'm going to meet him," and she ran down the Row and was soon in her brother's arms, while the other girls hurried into the dormitory away from sight.

"Oh, Tom, I'm so glad to see you! Don't look at me. I'm ashamed to have you find me like this, but I've been working since six o'clock on our daisy-chain. I didn't expect you for another hour. What do you mean by coming out at this time of day?"

"Well, sister, you see I got in town very early this morning and didn't have a thing to do after I finished my breakfast. Time began to hang heavily on my hands, and then, too, I wanted to see you, so I came out here on the first train I could get, but I'll go back if you are so disturbed at my early arrival."

"Of course I was only fooling, Tom; don't get so sarcastic. I'm delighted that you're here, only I'm a little ashamed to have you find me in such messy-looking clothes. But

let's not stand here on the Row talking. Come up to the Hall. I'll find Peggy Allison and send her downstairs to talk with you while I get into some good clothes. I have a room engaged for you down at the Inn and we'll go down there before lunch. Peggy's going to have a Harvard man out to-day and we've planned that you two will be together during the exercises this afternoon, for we have to sit with our classes.

"Before I forget it, Tom, I want to ask you to be particularly nice to Elizabeth. She's never known many college boys and didn't invite any one to be her guest to-day. I told her you were going to be her guest as well as mine, so please help me give her a royal good time. She's a mighty nice girl after you get to know her. At first she's a bit shy, but when you get her interested in something she's as lively as the next one. She's been invited to join Gamma Chi, and that shows she's all right, for only the nicest girls in college belong to that society."

"Isn't that a little conceited, Jean, considering the fact that you belong to it yourself?"

However, if you and Peggy Allison are samples of the girls who are members, it's all right.

"So this is Merton, the famous Merton. I call it a pretty fine sort of dormitory for a girls' college, of course not to be compared with ours, but rather decent, just the same. Are you going to live here next year, too?"

"No; you see we had room-drawing yesterday and my name commencing with 'C' comes near the top of the list and I drew a room in Wellington where Miss Hooper is matron."

"I suppose because you're a soph you've chosen a single."

"No, Tom, I've a double, and Elizabeth is going to room with me again next year and every year, I hope. After you know her you'll understand why I want her. Now go into the reading-room and make yourself comfortable and I'll see if I can find Peggy and send her down to you."

"Don't worry, Jean. I don't have to be amused. I'm perfectly able to take care of myself if you don't find her."

But Peggy was available and perfectly willing to devote herself to Tom Cabot, of whom she was very fond in spite of the few times she had met him. About half an hour later Jean and Elizabeth came downstairs dressed in their soft white muslins and flower-bedecked hats. They did look attractive and Tom beamed approvingly upon them and was most gracious as Jean introduced Elizabeth. Then she said, "Now we'll go down to the Inn and then we're ready to show you the sights. You've got to see everything while you are about it, so we'd better hurry, for lunch is to be served half an hour earlier than usual to-day."

They went to the Inn and found it thronged with guests and students and it was very fortunate for Tom that Jean had engaged his room several weeks in advance. After he had deposited his suit-case they started out on their tour of inspection. Tom kept the girls busy with questions about everything in sight, and insisted upon knowing the name of every good-looking girl they met. Once in a while they stopped for introductions, and dropped into

Miss Hooper's room in Wellington for a few moments.

"It's a mighty nice place, for a girls' college," said Tom as they finally entered Merton just as the bell sounded for lunch; "there's only one place I know of that's better and that's —"

"Yale, of course," said Jean; "you needn't bother to tell us. Are you ready for lunch now?"

"Ready! I should say I was; I'm nearly starved. I could eat half a dozen lunches. It's hours since I had my breakfast. Lead me to the food quickly or I perish. Am I going to be the only man among all you handsome girls? Not that I mind at all, but I'd like to know beforehand so I won't make any awful breaks to disgrace forever the House of Cabot."

"Don't worry, Tom; there'll be plenty of men besides you. Most of the girls will have their out-of-town guests here. Elizabeth is to wait on table, but we'll see her again after lunch. I've got to find Mrs. Thompson to see where we are to sit, for we won't have our

regular seats to-day, as lunch is to be served in the reading-room as well as in the dining-room."

Lunch over, a lot of the young people met in the hall and introductions were pretty general. Peggy's man, Mr. Paul Thorndike, Harvard 1912, and Tom became good friends at once and agreed to stick together closer than brothers until the Tree Exercises were over, when the girls were to meet them and take them to the spreads. They strolled up the hill to the trees where the exercises were to be held, and found the grounds fairly alive with the Class-Day guests in their best summer gowns and hats. Beyond the space allotted for the classes were rows upon rows of settees for as many of the guests as could be accommodated, and the others leaned up against the chapel or College Hall or walked back and forth in the background.

Just after two o'clock the three lower classes appeared in view carrying a long white daisy-chain. The band, concealed behind the trees, began to play softly, and at the sound of the music the girls swayed back and forth, lifting

their chain in the measure of the music and then danced in and out of the trees and finally formed two long lines on either side of the opening to the space roped off for the tree exercises. The chain was held high above their heads, and all at once every voice broke into "Alma Mater" and the stately seniors in their black caps and gowns marched down between the rows of girls and stood by the seats nearest the "Grand Old Elm," as the tree was called, under whose branches the temporary platform had been erected. Then the other classes dropped their chain upon the ground and marched two by two to their places. They had been singing "Alma Mater" all this time and when every girl stood by her seat all finished the verse they were upon and sat down together.

There was an address of welcome by the class president and then the tree oration, followed by the class history, which was extremely funny from beginning to end and boasted of all 1912 had done in her four glorious years at Ashton, and ended with the distribution of gifts to the undergraduates.

There were class songs and class yells, and after the senior class ode the Class-Day marshal proposed that they cheer all the buildings. Forming as they had done at the beginning of the exercises, the under-class girls cheered the seniors as they passed through the double lines and headed the long procession that hurried on from one building to another. Not one was forgotten, and many a throat ached when they finished and disbanded at the chapel steps. Each girl then hastened to find her guests and go on to the society and private spreads which were to be held in the society rooms and some of the college buildings.

"Did you think we would never finish?" said Jean, as she and Elizabeth and Peggy hastened up where Tom and Mr. Thorndike were leaning against College Hall.

"No," said Tom; "I enjoyed every moment. You've sure got some clever girls in this college. That was one of the best tree orations I ever listened to. Please introduce me to Miss Mary Frances Buffington. I'd like to talk with her. What's next on the programme?"

"We're going now to Gamma Chi spread in our club rooms, then after you've eaten all you can there, I've tickets for the Alpha Delt spread and the Tennis Club spread in the gym, and Madeleine Moore has invited us to a private spread in her room over in South. Of course we don't have to take them all in, but I think it will be loads of fun, for everywhere we go we will meet different people, to say nothing of the eats, which of course will appeal to Tom more than anything else. I propose for once to see if I can satisfy him on that score."

At all the spreads they found food and interesting people in abundance and laughed and talked and made and renewed acquaintances to their hearts' content. Every one was gay and happy and filled with the college spirit and was young at heart if not in years. Fathers and mothers and even grandparents mingled with young girls and men and seemed to be as much a part of it all as their sons and daughters. Where is there another place in the world so productive of good-fellowship and joy as a college class day?

From Madeleine Moore's upper room, where they went last, they sat by the windows and listened to the Glee Club singing the old college favorites. Old girls who were back for the day joined the singers on College Hall steps and swelled the chorus to two or three times its usual size. Every now and then the tinkle of the mandolins and guitars could be heard above the sweet voices of the girls and then was lost in the heavier choruses. It was almost dusk when the last notes died away and there still remained the dance in the gymnasium.

Tom left Jean and Elizabeth at Merton to dress for the dance, and he hurried to the Inn to get into his dress-suit. When the three strolled across the campus again in the direction of the gym, a perfect fairyland met their astonished eyes. Thousands of bright Japanese lanterns were strung about the entire grounds and swayed gently back and forth in the soft summer breeze. Here and there were the moving forms of belated dancers like themselves, moving mysteriously through the semi-darkness.

"I hate to leave such beauty," said Elizabeth. "I don't care anything about the dancing, so why not leave me here on one of these benches, Jean? You and Tom can go in and dance and stop for me when you come home."

"Well, I should say not," answered Tom. "Haven't you promised me part of the first dance and as many more as I want? Do you think we're going to leave you here for some prowling night-watchman to abduct? No, you've got to stay with us till the very last moment and perhaps between some of the dances we'll stroll out here for a cool breath."

When they finally reached the gymnasium, they found it literally packed with dancers, but they waded their way through the crowds, and Tom began the dance with Elizabeth, for Paul Thorndike had noticed Jean's entrance and begged her for the dance. It was not much pleasure for any one, as there was so little room that one was continually stepped on or crowded against a passing couple.

"I think about half an hour of this will be enough for me, Jean," said Tom, after the first dance. "I'm as fond as anybody can be

of dancing, but this is too much for me. Let's go up in the gallery and watch the others."

So up they went into the gallery and watched the whirling mass below them. It was much more fun, and many of their friends followed suit and joined them. Occasionally some of them went down on the floor, but returned almost exhausted with the struggle. About half-past ten o'clock, Elizabeth suggested that they take her home if they would not let her go alone, and she found Tom and Jean were both as ready to go as she.

When they stepped out into the fairyland of the campus, Jean exclaimed, "I agree with you, Elizabeth; this is much better than in that crowded, stifling gymnasium. Let's walk around out here for a while until we cool off."

It was beautiful out there in the cool stillness with only the muffled music breaking it occasionally, and all three became strangely silent for such very talkative young people. Jean broke the silence by exclaiming, "I know now what Cousin Nan meant that first night when she and I stood just here and she said,

‘Dear Old Ashton! How I love it all and how I hate to leave it, for it has done so much for me!’ Then I couldn’t understand what she meant and I smiled to myself as I listened to her, but now it’s different and I can say all that she said, only I’m so glad I am coming back next year, and the next, and the next, for three whole years. This going to college is the best thing in a girl’s life, isn’t it, Elizabeth?”

By this time they had reached Merton and good-nights had to be said, but Tom and Jean were to take an early morning train and had all the day to talk things over.

Although it was very early when the train drew out of the little station, Elizabeth was there to see the two off, and as the train started, Jean called from the platform, “Good-by, Beth, see you in New York a week from to-day. Don’t let Miss Hooper lose the train, for you know she has all our tickets and we can’t go to Europe without her. Good-by!” and the train steamed away as a very happy freshman started back to Merton to think things over.

It may be that some of the readers have become so interested in the doings of Jean and Elizabeth that they would like to know what they and Miss Hooper did during the summer of 1912 in the British Isles. For the benefit of these it may be stated that a second volume, entitled "Jean Cabot in the British Isles," will appear, giving their experiences in that delightful country.

THE END

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